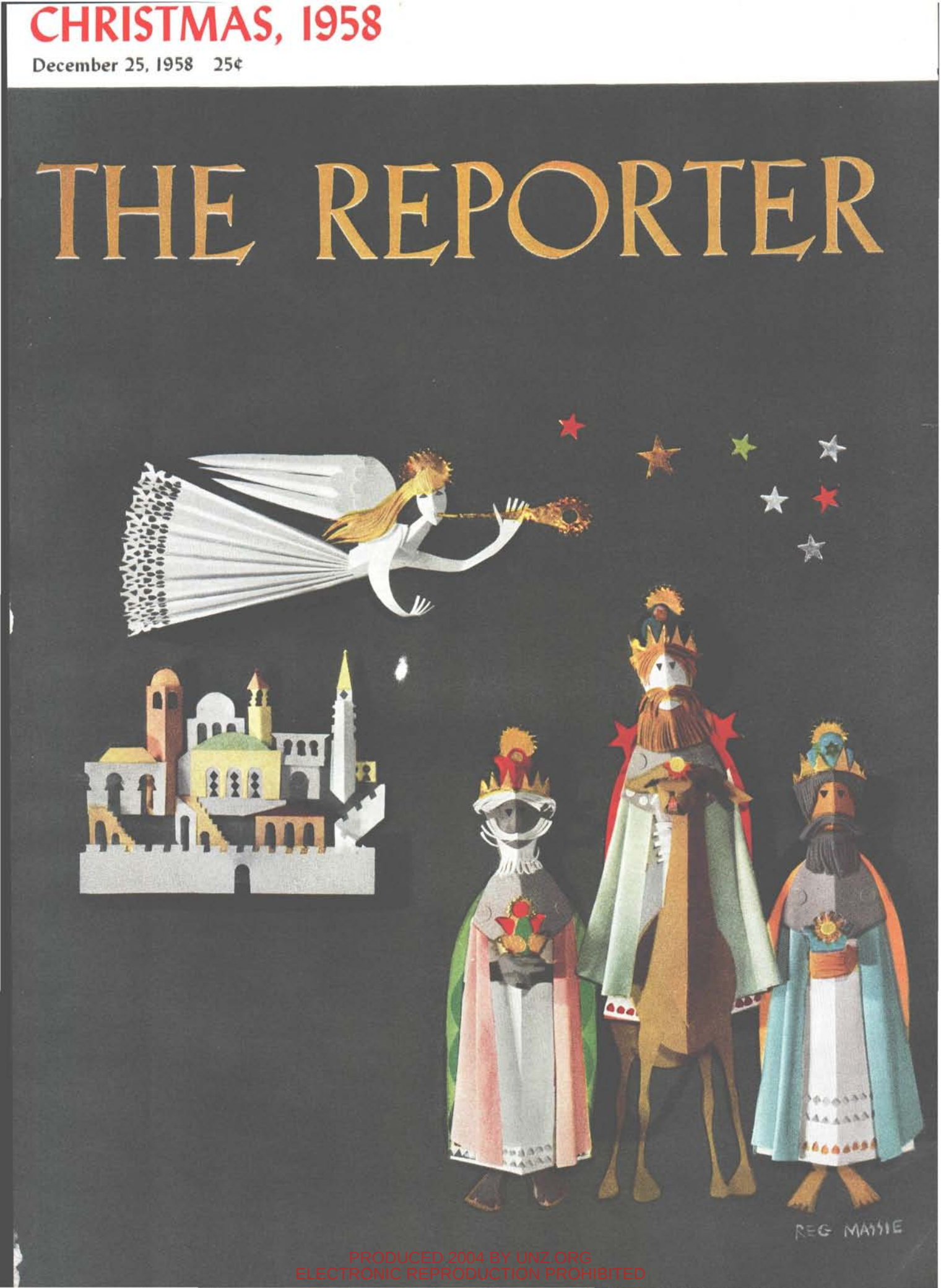
CHRISTMAS, 1958
December 25, 1958 25¢

THE REPORTER



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Their First Doctor . . .

FEW AMERICANS KNOW what it means for a child to suffer from trachoma. It is a progressive disease of the eyes which gradually, over a long period of time, leads to blindness.

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Dr. Thomas A. Dooley is the first professionally trained doctor these children have ever seen.

which has built and operates a new hospital only five miles from the border of Communist China.

Pictured above is Dr. Dooley with two Lao hill-tribe girls. He is the first professionally trained doctor these children have ever seen. MEDICO missions are springing up throughout the world, staffed by volunteer physicians and medical aides, wholly supported by the generosity of the American people.

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....A permanent dental clinic has been installed by Dr. Frederick S. Franck in Dr. Schweitzer's hospital at Lambarene, French Equatorial Africa;

....Dr. Theodore Binder operates a hospital at Pulcallpa, Peru;

....Two medical teams are being sent to Kenya in Africa and to Cambodia in Southeast Asia respectively under the direction of Dr. Mungai Njoroge and Dr. Emmanuel Voulgaropoulos;

....Another MEDICO team of six doctors and a nurse organized in cooperation with John Hopkins University School of Medicine, is now working in Jordan for a period of special surgery in the Arab refugee camps.

Volunteer doctors are waiting to staff additional MEDICO missions. Only funds are lacking. In this Christmas Season will you help MEDICO save a child's sight by your contribution today? Your gift may be made for any of the other purposes listed below. Please help—today.

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6—$250.00 gives a small clinical laboratory a microscope.

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THE REPORTER'S NOTES

Answer to Khrushchev

By now, everything that happened during the historic eight-and-a-half-hour conversation between Senator Humphrey and Nikita Khrushchev has become known to the public at large—or maybe more than actually happened. Still, there is a somewhat improbable quality about the interview between these two men.

According to the New York *Times*, the senator, at his first Washington news conference, told a questioner "that the Soviet leader had done most of the talking." But six days before, the same paper published a dispatch from its Moscow correspondent which stated: "The first four hours were spent at one end of a long conference table in Mr. Khrushchev's Kremlin office in earnest conversation 'but no speechmaking,' Mr. Humphrey said." From *Time* we learn that Humphrey began "by spending more than an hour in enthusiastic explanation of a pet project: an International Health Year."

We are confused. Has Khrushchev really outtalked Senator Humphrey? Even if the senator says so, we refuse to believe it. We know him: he's a tough, able, maybe overarticulate man who, as it is nearly universally recognized, has steadily grown with his job. He certainly can talk, but somehow he manages to think and learn and listen while talking. Maybe it is this phenomenal combination of qualities that Mrs. Roosevelt had in mind when she recently said that there is greatness about Humphrey. We sincerely hope she is right, for the range of the man's ability is amazing.

Perhaps what happened during his conversation with Khrushchev is that both men talked incessantly. But then how did the interpreters survive? No one has mentioned the strain on those hapless creatures. *Time*, with its typical passion for details sometimes unmarred by accuracy, even took the trouble to report that "At dinner's end, Humphrey made a forthright suggestion: 'I agree,' said Nikita Khrushchev, and the two tromped off to a Kremlin lavatory." We are glad to know the Kremlin has inside facilities.

THE KHRUSHCHEV-HUMPHREY interview is the latest and most spectacular instance of a new type of diplomacy, copyrighted by the Kremlin: the personal ascent to the summit granted by special dispensation of the resident autocrat to distinguished western visitors, perferably Americans. A ritual, or a protocol, has already been established. In their published reports the distinguished visitors reassure us that the autocrat looks human, vigorous, and rather well-dressed. He says nearly the same things to everybody, and uses his interviewers as gramophones for the same kind of records.

Frankly, we have our doubts about the usefulness of this kind of diplomacy. The interviewer is inevitably awed by his responsibility of listening and reporting. This handicap, plus the surroundings, plus the personality of the speaker, is nearly insurmountable. Offhand we can think of only one who, if invited to the Kremlin, could withstand the ordeal. It's Harry Truman. We can just see him, listening patiently for a while, for he can be a patient man, then gradually stiffening, his eyes hardening as the Khrushchev tirade goes on. When the peroration comes, with the traditional we-will-bury-you argument and all that, we see Harry Truman getting up and giving the only possible and long overdue answer: "Nuts." It wouldn't have to be translated.

WE HAVE BEEN THINKING a great deal about Harry Truman lately, for the situation created by Khrushchev's proposals on Berlin is exactly of the type that Truman was made to handle. He would say No: no negotiations over Berlin, no nonsense about a loose confederation of the two or of the three Germanys, or

CHRISTMAS LIST

For Khrushchev, continuing sessions of yak
With westerners expert at dishing it back.

To nations in chaos I wish, on the whole,
Freedom from generals (except for de Gaulle).

For Hoffa, decline and deserts—and both soon
Before we succumb to his Rule of the Goon.

For Ike—though the gift may arrive a bit late—
A handbook on How to Be Head of a State.

For Democrats, everywhere in the land,
A Faubus-proof, fireproof civil-rights stand.

For the moon: immoonity, please, for a while,
From whatever direction, from any missile.

And for you, my dear readers, a holiday peck
From your holly-bedizened and mistletoed

—SEC

THE REPORTER, December 25, 1958, Volume 19, No. 11. Entered as second class matter at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Published every other Thursday except for omission of two summer issues by The Reporter Magazine Company, 136 East 57th Street, New York 22, N. Y. © 1958 by The Reporter Magazine Company. All rights reserved under Pan-American Copyright Convention. Subscription prices, United States, Canada, U.S. Possessions and Pan American Union: One year $6, Two years $9.50, Three years $12. All other countries: One year $7, Two years $11.50, Three years $15. Please give four weeks' notice when changing address, giving old and new address. Send notice of undelivered copies on Form 3579 to: The Reporter, McCall St., Dayton 1, Ohio. Indexed in *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* and *Public Affairs Information Service*.

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about disengagement and so on. His "No" would disturb quite a few "realists," particularly among American and British liberals.

On the other hand—and here we are talking strictly for ourselves—we think our government should use the six-month period that Khrushchev has been kind enough to grant the West for a drastic re-evaluation of western diplomacy and strategy. This situation of multiple, ever-increasing trouble spots, invariably devised by the Kremlin, must be brought to an end. This should be our get-off-the-limb season—particularly in the Middle and the Far East.

Strangely enough, all the criteria and plans that have been suggested by various sources, Communist included, for Germany and Europe can find their proper application only in the Middle and Far East. The Rapacki Plan makes sense—but for Asia. The need for bases or allies on that big continent is more than questionable, and certainly countries like Pakistan can do without our military assistance. Talking bluntly to Syngman Rhee and promising retaliation in case of new Communist aggression should allow us to pull some of our forces out of South Korea.

The time is, if anything, overripe for a settlement of the Formosa problem, and for resumption of negotiations in Warsaw that should lead to acceptance of the fact that there are two Chinas. Negotiations with Russia and with the Middle Eastern nations aimed at neutralizing the region should be the most urgent order of the day for our diplomacy. This is a time when our diplomatic initiative should be relentless, and when it should be unmistakably shown that we are willing to initiate give-and-take negotiations on all problems. On all, that is, but one.

Not on Berlin, and not on Germany. East Germany is not a nation but a monstrous and cruel joke. Actually, Germany is being increasingly unified, but the unification is taking place within West Germany because of the migration from the East. The very existence of free Berlin hurts the Communists badly. Why should we be Good Samaritans to them?

These can be six good months. We can put the western alliance, our diplomacy, and our strategic plans in good shape; we can disengage ourselves at the periphery and concentrate all our strength where it matters the most. That is Berlin and Germany. If the Russians or their "agents" want to start some trouble there, we shall be ready.

Uncommon Criminals

Last June, General Franco boasted to a French journalist, "there are no political prisoners in Spain, only prisoners convicted of common crimes—robbery, murder, plundering, etc." What, then, are we to make of the current wave of arrests which has landed more than a hundred eminently respectable citizens in jail? Perhaps the generalissimo intended to cover this little business with his "etc."

The victims, all of whom are being held incommunicado until the Special Tribunal Against Freemasonry and Communism gets round to dealing with them, include dozens of lawyers, doctors, industrialists, and professional men. Their political opinions, so far as they can be accurately gauged from this distance, range from monarchist through liberal to mildly socialist. One of them is a founder and director of The Spanish Association of Friends of the U.S.A., established a few years back with the benevolent sponsorship of our ambassador to Spain. They represent, indeed, the class of people who are most likely to govern in a post-Franco régime. Unless, of course, it is the Communists who are to inherit the Spanish earth.

These Things Were Said

¶ I am sure that there is, in effect, a desirable level of automobile accidents . . . The automobile kills about 100 people a day, which seems terrible to the individual. But society is more used to death and recognizes the obvious need for it.—*John D. Williams, head of Mathematics Division, Rand Corporation, in* Fortune.

¶ I am going to put an end to the Democratic radicals in the Democratic Party.—*Democratic senator-elect Thomas J. Dodd of Connecticut, in the Hartford* Courant.

¶ I belong to the school of thought that believes the Supreme Court acted recklessly and irresponsibly in precipitating this crisis at the worst possible time when we already had enough crises on hand. . . . That thing was taking care of itself very well.—*Katherine Anne Porter, in the Richmond* News Leader.

¶ I wish the girls [streetwalkers] were not there for their own sakes. But they do not shock or offend me. They are quiet, friendly, mostly well-dressed and many of them pleasant to look at. No one is obliged to patronize them; and for my part I welcome a few cheerful greetings as I go to a restaurant. Of course it is very wrong that women should sell their bodies.—*Oxford historian A.J.P. Taylor, in the* New Statesman.

¶ Mr. Dillon [agent of the National Life Insurance Company of Vermont] stresses the importance of the wife: "She has to be on the team. We hire a family, not just the husband. We paint a very blue, discouraging picture at the start to the wife. We say: 'You know, Sally, your husband's going to be out three or four nights a week for the first couple of years. You may have to wear last year's dresses; you may even have to miss a few movies.' We don't romance the business like most agents do." . . .

"If an applicant survives the initial screening process, he's sent to two psychologists."—*Wall Street Journal.*

¶ An official of the cultural office of Szechwan [China] announced calmly to his visitors that the province now had 4,000,000 amateur writers grouped into 86,700 organizations and that they had produced no fewer than 78,450,000 literary works, mostly folk songs. Of these, he said, 3,700 collections of poems and ballads had been deemed fit for publications.—New York *Times.*

¶ The Business and Defense Services Administration of the Commerce Department, through its twenty-five industry divisions, continually urges companies to enlarge the scope of their civil defense planning.

It would be hard to find a corporate program more thoroughly and conscientiously planned than that of Standard Oil of New Jersey. . . . A small but well equipped hospital room, a dart board and ping-pong table, and a small locker filled with emergency whiskey rations (Haig & Haig) are among the other amenities.—*Fortune.*

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CORRESPONDENCE

'NO RETREAT FROM BERLIN'

To the Editor: I have read your editorial "No Retreat from Berlin" (*The Reporter,* December 11) with great interest and I feel that your assessment of the Soviet and Communist strategy vis-à-vis Berlin and Germany is a most convincing one.

The way you have presented the case of the divided Germany and the conclusions to be drawn from the present situation have struck me as being sound and well-balanced. I agree in particular with your observations about Berlin as an island of freedom behind the Iron Curtain and I think I can assure you on behalf of my government that no one—and that includes all political parties now represented in the Bundestag—would be inclined to sacrifice the freedom of the nation and their own honor for the sake of unifying Germany. In addition I also agree with you when you say there is no similarity between the present situation of China and that of Germany.

I am firmly convinced that the leaders of the West will counter this latest Soviet move in a way which leaves no doubt that the western Allies will live up to their commitments in respect to the guarantee of freedom for West Berlin.

DR. GEORG FEDERER
Consul General of Germany
New York

MEN OF REASON

To the Editor: I very much enjoyed reading Harry Ashmore's article "Arkansas: They Didn't Want a Man of Reason" (*The Reporter,* November 27). The author and I are long-time friends and his thoughtful analysis of the situation was very heart-warming. I am confident that it will not be too long before Arkansas again wants "men of reason."

BROOKS HAYS
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

To the Editor: It is hoped that Brooks Hays, who, according to Harry S. Ashmore's article "cleaves to the Bible and Edmund Burke," is straighter on his Bible than he is on his Burke. Burke did not believe "a representative must advocate the views of his constituency" but the direct opposite. A representative, Burke said (in a letter to his Bristol constituents on November 3, 1774), should give "weight" to his constituents' wishes and "high respect" to their opinions, "But his unbiased opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, or to any set of men living. These he does not derive from your pleasure—no, nor from the law and the constitution. They are a trust from Providence, for the abuse of which he is deeply answerable. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion."

Neither by Burkean nor Biblical standards need Mr. Hays apologize for his courageous stand for moderation, law, and decency.

JOSEPH A. PETERS
New York

TEMPESTS IN TEAKETTLES

To the Editor: I have read with interest Mr. Frank M. Albrecht's additions (*The Reporter,* November 27) to William Lee Miller's generous review of my book *The Americans* (*The Reporter,* October 30). Mr. Albrecht's comparison of the people in a nation to the water in a kettle is misleading, largely because the people about whom the historian writes do have theories of their own and *can* deceive themselves about the causes and consequences of their behavior. But his comparison sets the stage for a parable which helps me explain one of the points of my book. If the water in a kettle *did* believe that its desire to elevate itself accounted for its boiling while it was set over a flame, then one of the jobs of the historian would be to help the water understand the actual situation. I'm afraid Mr. Albrecht might still think that "intellectuals" ought to encourage the water in its high-minded illusions.

DANIEL J. BOORSTIN
Department of History
University of Chicago
Chicago

ARDREY CON AND PRO

To the Editor: If Mr. Robert Ardrey had not qualified his article on South Africa (*The Reporter,* November 27) as being "A Personal Report," his analysis undoubtedly would demand a more incisive attack. Suffice it to say quite simply that Mr. Ardrey should stick to playwriting and sundry commentary on Hollywood.

The black peoples of South Africa, notwithstanding an absence of either cultural artifacts or a readily identifiable dedication to Christianity, certainly can and do have a longing for "human" treatment and rights within their land. Such desires are not, as Mr. Ardrey implies, exclusively the American Negro's by virtue of any monopoly he may feel America has on the concepts of freedom and equality. For precisely these reasons, there is a great deal of relevancy in projecting the image of the American Negro's predicament upon the South African racial situation. The differences consist in degree only.

I beg Mr. Ardrey to examine the absurd contention that because it exists in South Africa today in an extreme and unintended form, apartheid (or Dr. Gerdener's theology) deserves further consideration as a racial policy meriting respect.

I wonder whether the seeds of ferment for constructive change Mr. Ardrey senses within the Dutch Reformed Church are more apparent than real. I wonder, too, about the captivating, picturesque impressions of South Africa's development which he has presented.

GILBERT F. WILLIAMS
The International House
University of Chicago
Chicago

To the Editor: As a South African beleaguered by questions the answers to which are already preconceived, I wish to thank Mr. Ardrey for a clear, unemotional understanding of the country's history and also a deep and erudite insight into its problems.

EDNA RITZUNBERG
Cleveland

SCRAP SAC?

To the Editor: A Reporter's Note for November 27 said that Secretary McElroy's new statement on the strategic program should be "discussed in every single detail." It also pointed out that Mr. McElroy "will also certainly be asked why he does not start by cutting down the expenditures for the Strategic Air Command if he is putting his major reliance on ICBMs." The future of SAC is one detail which should be discussed right now in order to build a defense against the inanities of questions such as this.

Washington—and many other places—likes to think in rather simple terms. With missiles, why bombers? It is as easy as that. The missile, we will now be told, can do everything a bomber can do, and faster. But simplicity is not the sole criterion for the quality of policy. It is necessary, therefore, to make it clear that in an age of missiles, the manned bomber has a vital role to play—that SAC is not yet ready for the pasture.

The ICBM has one built-in fault which cannot be overcome, and that is its need to stay on the ground until it is fired. Perhaps the most important way in which SAC acts as part of our military strategy is by its ability to have a large number of its planes in the air at any given moment so that it cannot possibly be caught on the ground and destroyed. Granted that missile bases can be dispersed, and even—as with the British IRBM—be put underground, the missile is still more susceptible to destruction than the manned bomber. The safety factor gained by the ability of SAC always to be airborne is important, for without it our ability to defend ourselves against a surprise attack is weakened.

The ICBM has another built-in disadvantage: it goes too fast. What is required today more than ever before is a retaliatory force that will take more than a half-hour to hit Russia after the button

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is pressed. Once the missile is off the ground it cannot be called back (it may be blown up, but that is far from a sure procedure) or deflected (and to where would we deflect it, if we could?). The fact that a manned bomber can be called back is the very essence of the protection it gives to America; the very fact that the planes of SAC are slow old cows today is all the more reason for keeping them. And it should be realized that our allies—whom we make nervous anyway—will feel better with our airmen in airplanes than sitting in a control room ready to press that awful button.

Further, it is far from clear that the bomber has been made obsolescent by technical advance, for it too has made some technical advance. The smaller stand-off bomb gives the manned bomber a new lease on life, for it makes it possible for a missile to be used with greater accuracy and without the drawback of "Once fired, that's it." The manned bomber need not appear over the city it is to destroy; it can sit some considerable distance away from it and then let loose with its big bang. Granted that anti-aircraft defense is more accurate than anti-missile defense today, and that large losses will still be expected, it is still true that the larger the force, the more chance for some planes getting through—and some planes are all that is needed.

Finally, today—right now, not in the science-fiction future—our missiles are far, far from the stage of development that would make it possible for America to depend on them as the only source of our strategic defense. Even if it is granted that some day the manned bomber will be at an end of its usefulness, that day has not arrived, and any miscalculation in estimating precisely when that day has come will do serious damage to our defense, which still needs the flexibility and subtlety of SAC. Envisage a world without SAC. Envisage what would happen when some blips came on the radar screen. (Missiles? Planes? Pigeons?) What commander then would not wish that he had some planes in the air that he could send off on a leisurely flight while he found out just what *was* happening?

There is in fact an alternative to SAC. It will not save much money, but it will improve our defense. It is the missile submarine. For some reason—perhaps because the Navy publicity office is not as effective as it should be—the fascination of the ICBM has made it seem the weapon of the future. In fact it is a much less potent weapon than the missile submarine simply because it is land-based, while the submarine is literally a hidden weapon that is practically incapable of detection. If Mr. McElroy is asked why he does not cut down on expenditures for SAC, he should answer that he will trade SAC for a sub, but that until he gets his sub he will stick with SAC.

WILLIAM J. NEWMAN
Associate Professor of Government
Boston University

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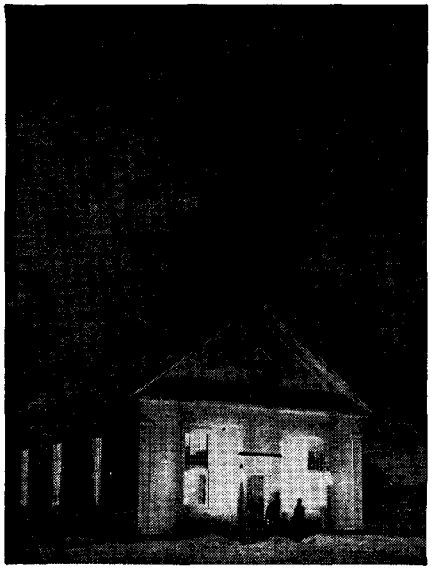

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WHO— WHAT— WHY—

IT IS SAID of many books that they are epoch-making, but in fact precious few are. Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* is one of these precious few. In this our Christmas issue we are publishing in place of an editorial some relevant passages from that novel, because we think it offers definite evidence that even in the most seemingly forlorn circumstances there is no such thing as the death of the spirit. From Pasternak's novel we learn of the re-emergence of an Other Russia: one that is very old and yet also very new. His novel is, and will remain, eternal dissent from the legitimacy of totalitarian politics—from all efforts to make man into a merely political animal.

John L. Hess's article on jet travel is one of a series we plan on the technological revolution of air transport that is now taking place. Unfortunately, as Mr. Hess's article proves, this technological revolution may not lead to a reduction of prices. Mr. Hess is a New York newspaperman who frequently writes on the business scene for the various periodicals, including *The Reporter*. His earlier studies of trends in railroad and automobile travel led him naturally into the subject of the jet revolution. . . . **William L. Rivers** is a native of Florida but not, he reports, "of Miami-type Florida. I am from Gainesville, which is Georgia-type Florida." He has, however, spent several years recently in Miami-type Florida, teaching at the University of Miami.

Recent events in France have given rise to profound concern among those who prize representative institutions in general and French democracy in particular. General de Gaulle has successfully established a new system —but will it work as he intended? **Edmond Taylor,** our European correspondent, reports on the French scene after the Gaullist electoral earthquake. . . . **George Kienzle** is director of the School of Journalism at Ohio State University, and has had experience as both a newspaperman (Columbus *Dispatch*) and a business executive (Borden's). He is the author of a book, *Climbing the Executive Ladder,* which is a best-seller in its field. . . . **Gregory Grossman** is Associate Professor of Economics at the University of California and has written on Soviet economic affairs for various learned journals.

Norman Podhoretz is now engaged in writing a book on the American literary scene over the past three decades—which led him, naturally to try to "place" Edmund Wilson, who is certainly part of that scene even if he sometimes seems to be towering over it. . . . In our issue for October 4, 1956, we published **Antonio Barolini's** story "The Rivers of Vicenza." His work has also appeared in the *New Yorker* and other magazines. . . . **Marya Mannes,** as many of our readers may not know, is also "Sec," whose verse gladdens our opening pages. A collection of these poems, illustrated by Robert Osborn, is to be published late next month by George Braziller. It is entitled—modestly and ambiguously—*Subverse*. . . . **Robert P. Knapp, Jr.,** is a West Point graduate and former lieutenant colonel of artillery who served in China under General Wedemeyer and in 1946 as a team commander in the United States effort to mediate the Chinese Civil War. . . . **Otto Friedrich,** who frequently contributes to our pages, has just completed a long essay on F. Scott Fitzgerald which is destined (he hopes) for one of the big fat academic quarterlies. . . . **Gerald Weales** teaches modern drama at the University of Pennsylvania. . . . **Roland Gelatt** is Executive Editor of *High Fidelity* and author of *The Fabulous Phonograph* (Lippincott).

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THE REPORTER

THE MAGAZINE OF FACTS AND IDEAS

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VOLUME 19, NO. 11 **DECEMBER 25, 1958**

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Editorial and Business Offices:
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CHRISTMAS, 1958

In the democratic nations of the West the balance between Unto Caesar and Unto God has been upset by the multiplicity of Caesarean powers, all claiming to serve the sovereign citizen and all making demands on him, while man's devotion to God has become mostly a matter of taste. In the Communist nations of the East, there is no other realm than Caesar's and the very thought of Unto God has been outlawed. Boris Pasternak, acting for himself alone, as befits a poet, has re-established the balance. The response that his book has aroused in the West is as momentous a fact as the book itself. The East too, we are sure, will respond.

The Reporter, *which first in this country published excerpts from* Doctor Zhivago, *celebrates Christmas by reprinting some of the words Pasternak wrote about Christ.*—M.A.

Now what is history? It is the centuries of systematic explorations of the riddle of death, with a view to overcoming death. That's why people discover mathematical infinity and electromagnetic waves, that's why they write symphonies. Now, you can't advance in this direction without a certain faith. You can't make such discoveries without spiritual equipment. And the basic elements of this equipment are in the Gospels. What are they? To begin with, love of one's neighbor, which is the supreme form of vital energy. Once it fills the heart of man it has to overflow and spend itself. And then the two basic ideals of modern man—without them he is unthinkable—the idea of free personality and the idea of life as sacrifice. Mind you, all this is still extraordinarily new. There was no history in this sense among the ancients. They had blood and beastliness and cruelty and pock-marked Caligulas who had no idea of how inferior the system of slavery is. They had the boastful dead eternity of bronze monuments and marble columns. It was not until after the coming of Christ that time and man could breathe freely. It was not until after Him that men began to live toward the future. Man does not die in a ditch like a dog—but at home in history, while the work toward the conquest of death is in full swing; he dies sharing in this work. . . .

And then, into this tasteless heap of gold and marble, He came, light and clothed in an aura, emphatically human, deliberately provincial, Galilean, and at that moment gods and nations ceased to be and man came into being—man the carpenter, man the plowman, man the shepherd with his flock of sheep at sunset, man who does not sound in the least proud, man thankfully celebrated in all the cradle songs of mothers and in all the picture galleries the world over. . . .

Something in the world had changed. Rome was at an end. The reign of numbers was at an end. The duty, imposed by armed force, to live unanimously as a people, as a whole nation, was abolished. Leaders and nations were relegated to the past. They were replaced by the doctrine of individuality and freedom. Individual human life became the life story of God, and its contents filled the vast expanses of the universe.

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The Growing Pains Of Jet Travel

JOHN L. HESS

HISTORY will doubtless record this period as the bright dawn of civilian jet travel. But to the aviation industry, it is more like a stormy night fraught with peril. Plane builders and airlines have taken off into the unknown with no flight plan and visibility nearly zero.

A great deal has been written, much of it true, about the golden promise of the jet revolution. In increasing the speed and size of airliners roughly by half, the jet promises to bring rapid transportation to far-off places within the reach of millions. But seldom has there been a more reluctant group of revolutionaries than the American plane builders and airlines. They cannot be accused of haste. The principle of jet flight (the burning of fuel in a pipe to thrust a plane forward) was embodied in a British patent before the Second World War. During the war, the Germans put the first jets into the air. Immediately after the war, the British managed to spare money and energy from reconstruction to take the lead in the inevitable development of civilian jets, and in 1949 the Comet I took to the air.

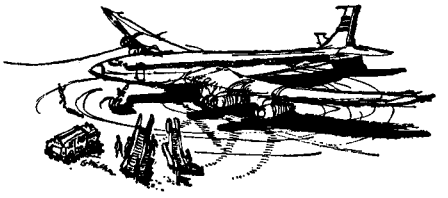
A series of disasters cut short the career of the Comet I, but they produced a vital lesson: the vulnerability to metal fatigue in rapid, sustained flight. Today's jets are believed to have licked the problem, thanks to the British venture.

While de Havilland was working toward Comet IV, the Russians developed the twin-jet TU-104—seventy of which are now in scheduled service within the Communist bloc—and the French produced the Caravelle, also a serviceable twin-jet. Meanwhile, the British built and marketed the highly promising turboprop Viscount, a plane that ranks between the piston airliner and the big new jets in size and speed, but is considably cheaper to operate and is able to take off from comparatively short runways.

Boeing's Head Start

Where was the American aviation industry all this time? It was dragging its flaps, for what seemed to be more or less valid reasons. Most plane and engine builders were up to their ears in *military* jets, and toward the end of the first postwar decade the emphasis in this field was already veering to guided missiles, soon perhaps to supplant jets as primary weapons.

Douglas Aircraft dominated the airliner business around the world



with its excellent piston-engined DC planes. Its contribution to the coming revolution was to do a little drafting-board work on jet and turboprop design, much as General Motors in recent years has dubiously worked up plans for a small economy car for production if the American public should become so hardened against persuasion as to demand one. Douglas was quite content to let the British undertake the costly pioneering job. But as a result, it has lost at least temporarily its position of leadership, not only internationally but even in the United States.

America's first civilian jet is a direct product of government-subsidized development for the military. Boeing Airplane, unsuccessful in prior ventures in the civilian aviation market but a huge success as a builder of jet bombers, early conceived the idea of producing a jet airliner. But such a venture runs into the scores of millions. As *Fortune* admiringly related awhile back, Boeing set out to further its project at a reduced cost and, at the same time, to help the national defense. In a Pentagon campaign that took several years, it persuaded the Air Force, first, that it needed a large jet tanker plane to refuel its jet bombers at high altitudes, and then, after that was built, that it would be good policy to rent to Boeing the tooling created to build the tanker. Boeing thus got better than a year's jump on Douglas. The Boeing 707s that mark America's entry into civilian flight are essentially the KC-135 tanker.

At first Boeing found the airlines harder to sell than the Air Force. But Pan American had long ago realized that the first international airline to offer jet service would gain a tremendous jump on the competition. It had been on the verge of buying the Comet I but was turned back by the disasters. Finally, just three years ago, Pan Am broke the ice with a big order for Boeing 707s and the still-to-be-delivered DC-8s. The other major U.S. lines were forced unhappily to scramble for positions on the Boeing and Douglas delivery schedules.

THEIR UNHAPPINESS was understandable. In 1952, when Boeing was hopefully building its prototype jet tanker, the twelve major domestic airlines were earning a net profit after taxes of more than fifteen per cent on their capital, according to the Civil Aeronautics Board (which counts borrowed money as invested

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capital in figuring the appropriate profit). Air travel was growing at a rate beyond estimates. Why shift from richly rewarding piston opera-

tions to the known and unknown hazards of jets?

That this view has not greatly changed was suggested in a profile of William A. Patterson, president of United Air Lines, in the financial section of the New York *Times* last May. It refers to Patterson's "insistence on keeping at least one wheel on the solid ground of profitable operation" and explains, "He is not one to fly blithely into the jet age with its $3,000,000,000 bill for converting from propeller operations without some idea as to how that vast expenditure is to be financed from industry earnings that in 1957 totaled only $42 million."

These figures should be approached with care—with at least one wheel on the ground, so to speak. Since airline fares, mail rates, and subsidies are figured on an ideal goal of eight per cent net profit (ten per cent for the international carriers), it is not surprising that company and CAB estimates of earnings often vary widely. It is conceded, however, that after-tax earnings of the major domestic "trunk" airlines averaged above nine per cent from 1950 until the recession, and lately have recovered handsomely. As for the cost of the shift to jet operations, at this stage one can make only a rather wild guess.

Nevertheless, the cost is sufficient to imperil the existence of weak airlines in this country and abroad. The price of a jet liner is more than $5 million. Just one of its four engines costs a quarter of a million. And these are only the beginning. Crews must be trained; specialized repair shops, hangars, and soundproofed passenger facilities must be built; and many airports must be extended to handle the heavy jets. It is estimated (another guess) that the cost of conversion in ground operations equals the cost of the jets themselves.

In the long run the jets will more than make up for their cost by their size and speed. In a fortnight, one of the big planes is theoretically capable of carrying as many passengers across the Atlantic as the *Queen Mary*. One DC-8 jet will equal three DC-7s in capacity. And experience with the first civilian jets tends to confirm the experience of the military: that though jet engines are expensive, their maintenance problems are minor by comparison with piston jobs, basically because they have few moving parts.

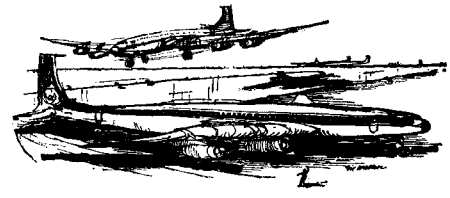
Bugs and Banshees

Early experience has also, however, produced some disappointments. There was quite a hullabaloo in the press last month about a "race" between a BOAC Comet and a Pan Am Boeing. Overlooked was the fact that the "winner" took more than nine hours to cross and both planes had to stop to refuel—a far cry from the "breakfast in London, lunch in New York" that had been forecast. The piston-engined DC-7, it was noted, has no trouble crossing the Atlantic nonstop. The disappointment is sharpened by the fact that the "economy" seating arrangement is predicated on the theory that the public will not mind being a bit crowded for a short trip.

The Pan Am people blame the weather and the Port of New York Authority. It is a characteristic of jets that, like people, they are sluggish when it is warm and muggy, and become invigorated when it is dry and cold. Thus, in the kind of weather we have had on both sides of the Atlantic this fall, the new planes have had to burn more fuel than planned in the take-off and in the climb to their most efficient altitude, which is about 35,000 feet.

One of the penalties of the shift to turbine-powered planes has been the high-pitched whine of their air compressors, which add a new banshee note to the lives of communities near busy airports. However, the airlines point to an offsetting advantage: unlike the piston engine, the jet does not fire spark plugs in flight, and hence does not interfere with ground radio and television reception. If one is bothered by jet noise, then, the thing to do is to turn up the volume on the TV set, and the audio gunfire should drown out the scream overhead.

The Port Authority has ordered that the jets observe take-off patterns that minimize the noise problem for nearby communities. These curbs also tend to increase fuel consumption. Furthermore, the noise-suppression devices on the Boeing don't seem to have come up to expectations, either in muffling the noise or as a cost factor. They had been estimated to cut efficiency no more than two or three per cent; the word is that they are taking more than five per cent. Douglas promises a better device, but that remains to be seen, or heard. Meanwhile, all these factors are requiring the jets to carry more fuel than foreseen, and therefore to make a refueling stop on their way across the ocean. (The



alternative would be to lighten the load by turning away cash customers, Heaven forfend.)

These headaches should prove temporary. The weather from here on normally turns clear and cold, and Idlewild is about to open a long new runway that will permit take-offs with heavier loads. But the underlying reason for the failure of the early service to live up to promises is that the Boeing model being used was designed for transcontinental, not transatlantic, service. In the race to be first, Pan Am and BOAC would not wait for the longer-range airliners due in 1959. Their haste, deplored by less wealthy competitors, has also reversed the traditional pattern of development for new aircraft—that is, the jets are being introduced on the North Atlantic route rather than on overland routes. Anyhow, Pan Am has no com-

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plaints. Travelers are clamoring to ride the jets, and it is presumed that the novelty of the experience and the smoothness and quietness of the trip will make up for its unexpected duration.

The Secondhand Market

Airline officials complacently admit that the new planes have made money from the start. Of course, they have been carrying nearly full payloads. The big question in the industry is how they will do when the novelty wears off and all the airlines have jets, with their huge capacity. In a special study report prepared for and released by the White House last summer, Dr. Paul W. Cherington, Harvard transportation expert, warned: "At present, traffic growth has stopped completely. . . . there is at least room for doubt that the necessary traffic can be generated to make the enlarged capacity economically sound. Greater credibility could be given to the carriers' traffic forecasts if they could identify the new classes or types of customers who they believe will provide the almost doubled volume of traffic."

It was widely predicted before any jets were in service that they would have to sell at least two-thirds of their seats just to break even. It is now whispered in airline circles that one-third is quite sufficient. Oddly enough, both estimates could be right. For one thing, international fares are far higher than domestic ones. For another, no two lines have the same costs. But clearly, the initial costs and the heightened competition for passengers will inflict punishment on some in the industry.

As a matter of fact, even airlines that have not yet put up a dime are feeling the squeeze. The industry has long enjoyed two related fringe benefits. New airliners have been rapidly depreciated for income-tax purposes, while actually they are surprisingly long-lived. Once their cost has been written off, they have been sold abroad or to feeder airlines, frequently for more than they cost new, yielding the seller a handsome "nonrecurring capital gain," as the stockholder reports put it. Now the jet revolution has pulled the magic carpet out from under the market for piston-engine planes; everybody is buying jets or turboprops. Those non-recurring gains just aren't recurring any more.

What to do about the suddenly obsolete world fleet of piston airliners is one of the most agonizing problems of the world's jet revolution. There are some fifteen hundred four-engine planes in service and close to five thousand transports of all types; the last piston ones are being delivered even now to unfortunate customers who ordered them long ago. The airlines that ordered jet equipment three years ago appear to have based their budgeting on the big returns they were then getting on their secondhand craft. Now some have had to cancel orders for jets—a frightening matter for the manufacturers, who are committed to an investment of hundreds of millions in the new development, and whose ability to break even remains in doubt.

The producers have been forced to accept some piston planes as trade-ins, setting up sales-rental organizations for the purpose; an airplane exchange has just been organized in New York to bring buyer and seller together. But these are clearly stopgap measures. When deliveries of jets and turboprops are in full flood, there will be little work for the older planes. The worried discussions in world aviation circles center on solutions likely to cost Uncle Sam large sums: a mothball fleet as a western defense reserve; the purchase of some piston planes as military transports (though the airlines are trying to get the Pentagon to turn over more of the military transport business to them); the possible but costly conversion of piston-engine airliners to turboprops. Manufacturers already have sounded out the government about buying the unbuilt jets that have been canceled by customers, and about financing the sale of new equipment to hard-pressed carriers abroad.

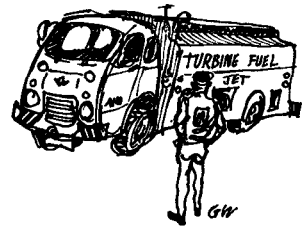
The Surcharge Issue

If the outlook is rugged for the weaker U.S. lines, it is worse for many airlines abroad. These have been a considerable source of pride to their countries at a moderate cost. For little more than the price of a couple of DC-7s, a state airline could be in business, flying its national colors to the capitals of the world. It generally did not break even, because at this stage it usually operated at half capacity or less, but the tab was not heavy. Will the national exchequers underwrite the kind of outlays it takes to compete in the jet race?

Even relatively sturdy foreign lines have been staggered by the impact of jet competition. Their budgets, based on reasonable forecasts of passenger traffic and of plane depreciation, have been thrown out of kilter. Now their customers are lining up at the BOAC and Pan Am ticket counters. In buying planes and in borrowing money, the smaller companies must get in line behind the big ones. Understandably, they have appealed to the big fellows for a break. They want a surcharge imposed on jet fares as a handicap, at least until all airlines are jet-equipped and have a clearer idea of jet costs.

To this Pan Am has replied that jet fares should be slashed instead, since it is only by encouraging mass travel that the full potential of the jet can be realized. It has been estimated that the new planes now on order will about double the capacity of the world air fleet in three years. Meanwhile, the recession and various fare increases have interrupted the growth of airline travel, with a notable exception—the new "economy," or coach, service across the Atlantic ($454 New York to London and return). But even this is too high to tap the great middle-income group that is limited to two weeks' vacation and now spends it on this side of the Atlantic.

This argument is hard to dispute, though Pan Am is also presumably not unaware of the competitive



advantage it enjoys in offering jet service even at regular fares while other lines are waiting for new equipment. It should not be supposed, by the way, that Pan Am is

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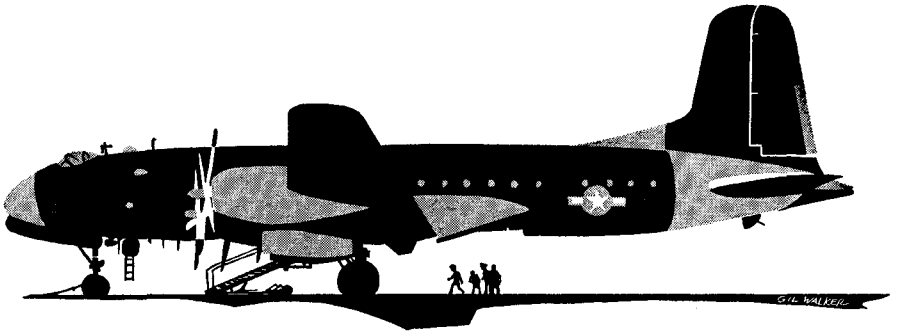

for fare cuts in all cases. It has bitterly protested rate cutting by competing South American lines, and Chairman James R. Durfee of the CAB joined it in publicly deploring the practice.

It was Pan Am, too, that protested last winter about the sandwiches served by competing carriers on economy-fare flights. It won a solemn ruling from the International Air Transport Association that sandwiches must be largely and visibly bread "or similar breadlike material . . . simple, that is, not complicated," and eschewing such dainties as "smoked salmon, oysters, caviar, lobsters, game . . ." It was a grim day for *haute cuisine.*

The Battle of Rome

In the first serious skirmish over the surcharge issue, Pan Am was a clear victor. Early this fall, it advertised the inauguration of daily jet service from New York to Rome—apparently without getting clearance from the Rome air authorities. The Italians said Ciampino Airport was overcrowded and could not handle the jets without disrupting schedules; a new field is near completion and they had hoped Pan Am could wait for that. And since jets were a new service not contemplated under existing agreements, they demanded that Pan Am impose an extra fare, thus protecting the competitive position of Alitalia Airlines. Pan Am balked too.

The impasse was brief. The American ambassador, James D. Zellerbach, called on Premier Amintore Fanfani, and an embassy official called on the Italian civil air subsecretary. According to a high source, the embassy man said the United States would regard it as an unfriendly act if Rome did not let the Pan Am jets land. Rome backed down. Coincidentally, Alitalia suddenly obtained a long-sought loan from the Export-Import Bank of Washington to help it buy four DC-8 jets.

Disputes over jet fares conceivably can lead to chaos in international air relations. At present, rates are controlled by an international pact, which comes up for renewal in the spring. (The terms are worked out by the airlines and then ratified by their governments.) A majority of the airlines favor a surcharge, but a *unanimous* vote is required. With powerful Pan Am and BOAC opposed to a surcharge, the outlook is for a contest of brinkmanship on both sides. The alternative to a multilateral pact would be a host of bilateral negotiations and jockeying over air routes and rates—a pretty mess to contemplate. In a showdown, it seems doubtful that things will go that far; a fair guess is that the *status quo* will be extended, with possibly some measure of U.S. relief to the foreign lines in the background.

Showdown on Costs and Mergers

A showdown on fares within the United States also is near. While Pan Am has been talking about cutting rates, the domestic airlines have been clamoring for a substantial increase, arguing that the capital needed to pay for the jets can be raised from investors only if profits are increased. The stock market has taken a rather more bullish attitude, for airline shares have been in the van of the great market rise since January. The supply of shares is limited, because during the early 1950's, when profits were at their peak, the airlines were notoriously reluctant to sell stock to the public, preferring instead to go into debt to buy the new DC-7s. Now, oddly, they argue that because they have such a "narrow equity base" in relation to their debts, they cannot risk the heavy losses that may occur in the jet transition. In other words, because they have put up so little money of their own, they should be granted a larger return!

From a broader point of view, the airlines' argument about the problem of raising capital—an argument popular in other industries as well—is a curious reversal of the old idea that technological improvement leads to lower prices; it is now held that higher prices are needed to achieve technological improvement. It is doubtful that, once achieved, the improvement will cut prices; there was no clamor on the part of the airlines to cut fares at the height of their prosperity a few years ago.

Paradoxically, a fare rise would sharply increase the pressure within the industry. The capacity of the airlines is in the process of expanding explosively, and savage competition lies ahead for the existing traffic. If one DC-8 can do the work of three DC-7s, what will become of the other two crews and of their mechanics? This was an underlying issue of a recent rash of labor troubles in the industry. It is also the direct cause of the fight over the "third man in the cockpit," the flight engineer. The pilots' union demands that he be a licensed pilot—ostensibly as a safety factor. The engineers' union replies, "Over our dead body"—which seems to be what the pilots' union had in mind. What they are scrapping for, of course, is to salvage jobs for their members in the drastic layoffs that lie ahead.

The only happy solution for the airlines and their employees would be an expansion of traffic that would keep up with the growth of capacity and provide jobs and business enough for all. Another fare increase would hardly contribute to such an outcome.

The CAB soon will issue a historic ruling on the fare question, following a lengthy inquiry. What it will decide is hard to guess. Last April, it granted a 6.6 per cent interim rise, which the airlines accepted without thanks, and in October another three per cent. Recently the agency told the industry that it was not of a mind to permit any extra charge for jet service as such, since jets are actually more economical to operate than piston planes, and this should "be reflected in lower fares so as to achieve

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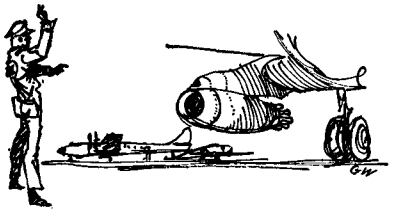
maximum development of the traffic potential . . ." However, it would be unwise to assume that the CAB will pursue this logic in its basic ruling on air fares. As with all the regulatory agencies, there is strong pressure from one interested party, in this case the airlines, but virtually none from the other, the public.

THERE HAS JUST BEEN a vivid demonstration that the CAB cannot necessarily be relied on to follow its own established policy. Pan Am and National Airlines boldly filed an application to swap planes and stock in what amounts to a partial merger. The plane swap made a good deal of sense; Pan Am jets, flying from London to New York, were to go on to Miami on National's route and return, thus adding three or four hours of well-paid flight to the workday. Also, planes would be shifted to the transatlantic run in the summertime,



and to the New York-to-Florida route in the winter season. Nobody expected the CAB to raise any objection to a plane-rental deal, which seems to be legally unexceptionable. But the CAB long has been leery of mergers as threats to competition; it has barred mergers between domestic and international airlines. And observers wondered why it was necessary for Pan Am and National to exchange shares as well as planes. So eyebrows went up when the CAB told the two lines they could go ahead with *both* aspects of the deal, putting the stock concerned into trusteeship pending a final ruling. Another surprise was that the rest of the industry raised virtually no objection. It may be that the boys have decided competition is a luxury the jet age can hardly afford—and that a number of mergers are in the works.

On December 4, the CAB made a possibly prophetic reversal of its policy against extra charges for jet service. It allowed National to charge ten dollars more for jet flights to Miami—not because they are jet, it said, but because of the "luxury service." Actually, the problem is that Pan Am has the plane divided into first-class and economy seating. National now calls the first-class seats "luxury" from New York to Miami, and calls the economy section "first-class."

Where the Money's Coming From

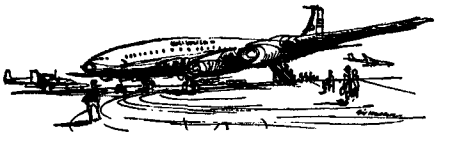
If the CAB *should* feel inclined to oppose the trend, either to mergers or to higher fares, it would have the redoubtable Senator George Smathers to contend with. Last spring the Florida Democrat held a remarkable inquiry into the plight of the railroads. It is said that the rail sidings in Washington were crowded with the private cars of railroad presidents come to plead poverty. They came away with half a billion dollars of Federal credit for new equipment and, better yet, a wider degree of freedom to fix rates and to abandon services than ever before. The sympathetic senator tried also to get the railroads Federal credit to meet their old bond obligations, but this was too much for the House. Having done all he could, he has now turned his attention to the airlines, as seems only fair. He has proposed an investigation to determine whether the airlines are not overextending themselves in ordering $5 billion worth of jet equipment (another of those wild figures). The airline industry through the Air Transport Association promptly welcomed the proposal, as well it might. It may have indicated the line of the inquiry by its complaint that the airlines had been "struggling against many Government-imposed obstacles" and its plea to Congress to remove them.

To a bystander, the airlines seemed to be saying to the government, "What have you done for me lately?" Since the birth of the industry, generally dated from the passage of the Civil Aeronautics Act in 1938, the airlines have been carefully nurtured on Federal subsidies, and it is indeed statutory policy that the government ensure a reasonable profit to any airline serving a needed route. For the last year and a half, it has been the industry's proud boast that all twelve trunk airlines were at last off direct subsidy. The claim now appears to have been premature, for the CAB has moved to give Northeast Airlines $4,086,646 as a *retroactive* subsidy to meet "an urgent need for additional working capital."

There is no question that the industry urgently needs new capital to finance the shift to jets. It will raise it, too, with the government practically guaranteeing an eight per cent return (ten per cent for the international carriers over the long run), even where the money is borrowed at, say, five per cent. And a rise in the "fair return" percentage is under negotiation. The tussle in Wall Street is largely over how the money is to be raised. The airlines naturally prefer to borrow; the interest on debt is tax-deductible as a business expense, while dividends paid on stock are not. Also, a small stock base with a large debt gives the shares a great "leverage" when money is being made, and a huge growth in value when debts are paid off. But it works the other way, too—a failure to earn the interest on debt can quickly wipe out a small stock base. So the investment bankers have been demanding that the airlines issue new stock as well as float new loans, much as a prudent bank will require a borrower to put up some of his own money when getting a loan to buy a car.

However the money is raised, it will bring in a handsome return if the new jets can be kept busy. But if traffic stagnates, Uncle Sam will have to pick up a very large tab. It will be no source of pride if the airline industry reaches the age of twenty-one next year still dependent on an allowance from Uncle.

AS HAS BEEN SAID in connection with another kind of revolution, one can't make an omelette without breaking eggs. We must expect some rough times in the transition from flight at 350 m.p.h. to flight at 575 m.p.h. It would be pleasant to look forward to things settling down in



the aviation industry after a few turbulent years, but that is not very likely. Lockheed, for one, promises a *supersonic* airliner by 1963. We had all better fasten our seat belts.

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On the Shifting Sands Of Miami Beach

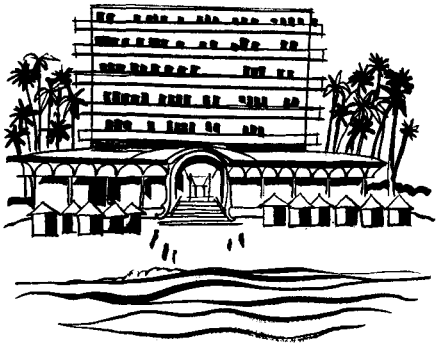
WILLIAM L. RIVERS

IF DURING the first three months of 1959 several visitors to Miami Beach have to sleep in their air-conditioned Cadillacs because there aren't enough hotel rooms to go around, hundreds of hotel operators will breathe easily for the first time since what seems destined to go down in history as the Terrible Winter of '58. Anyone who suggested in December, 1957, that Miami Beach might soon be considered a disaster area would have been booked into the night clubs for laughs. The entire area was primping for "the biggest tourist season in our history." Miami Beach alone was spending more than $50 million for new tourist accommodations; all of Dade County was laying out $75 million on its nearly five hundred motels (11,000 rooms) and 538 hotels (45,000 rooms). Then the tourists came to Miami Beach and found themselves in the middle of a winter of variable weather: a cool day followed by a wet day followed by a cold day. Some of the hotels displayed hopeful HAVE HEAT signs, but the visitors came and went so rapidly—air travel makes it much easier than it used to be—that Miami Beach became one huge revolving door.

The hotel economy rolled almost into the summer without public tremors, the operators releasing estimates indicating that business was off only a little: five per cent in the luxury hotels, five per cent in the small ones, maybe ten per cent in the mediums. Then a receiver was appointed for one of the mediums, a splendid structure in a choice ocean-front location. Two more hotels were in court within a week. By mid-June, operators of ten of the ocean-front palaces were deep in financial trouble for all to see, at least another dozen were known to be nursing big money difficulties in private, and no one wanted to estimate how many others were being carried by reluctant creditors. Some of the most imposing were revealed to be sharing the most prosaic of problems with the man who has been renting a walkup all his life: they couldn't get up the money for the laundry and light bills.

Frayed Shoestrings

Last winter was indeed a harsh one for the Sunshine State, yet not a hotel in Florida outside Dade County was in bankruptcy court as a result of the cold weather. Why did all the hard luck settle on Miami Beach?



"The richest real estate in the world," it soon became apparent, is often in the hands of entrepreneurs working on the shortest of shoestrings. Most Miami Beach hotels are operated by lessors; many of them are considered by career hotel men to be amateur operations that are little better than legalized but perilous gambles. The operators bet on a big January, a giant February and March, and enough isolated high spots during the rest of the year to make up for the break-even and money-losing months. If they lose the bet, another lessor takes over. During the Terrible Winter of '58 there were more gamblers losing more than ever before.

Some of the career hotel men also lost money last season; but in almost every case of bankruptcy, amateur management had been taking its toll for several years. Haines Colbert of the Miami *News*, in a notable job of painstaking reporting, traced the history of one of the first hotels to go into bankruptcy last spring. When the lease had been transferred nine times, it was so sticky from its travels through a legal morass that no one could be sure who owned what. The claims were argued in court—and the title went all the way back to the original builder. By April, 1958, the hotel had been under twelve managements, most of them amateur lessors.

A few amateurs have fought through to first-rank professional status, among them the president of the Fontainebleau, Ben Novack. A strong-faced, outspoken man in his early fifties, Novack probably started with less and piled it higher than any other entrepreneur on Miami Beach. He arrived in Miami just before the Second World War with less than two thousand dollars, the proceeds from the sale of a Broadway men's store. Novack leased hotel after hotel, stepping upward with each new enterprise. He built the Sans Souci in 1946, and battled a co-owner, Harry Mufson, so violently that when Novack built the Fontainebleau (having sold his Sans Souci stock for $1.5 million) and made it the "hotel of the year" in 1954, Mufson tried to shade him by putting up the hotel of 1955, the Eden Roc, right next door.

SUCH SKIRMISHING among the hotel men is not uncommon, but it has become more pronounced in recent months, and not only because of the bad weather of 1958. Miami Beach is in flux; part of it never did fit the stereotype of the Miami Beach of gaudy grandeur, and even the part that still fits the stereotype is changing rapidly.

Connected by causeways to Miami—which is a much larger, entirely separate, and infinitely more diverse city on the mainland coast—Miami Beach is a long, skinny, seven miles

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of ex-swamp. Less than fifty years ago, the population was almost evenly divided between alligators and snakes. Legend or truth, which are inextricably mixed, has it that promoter Carl Fisher brought in truckloads of razorback hogs from the piney woods of Georgia to dispose of both. In 1915, Fisher filled the swamp with rocks and sludge from the bottom of the bay, and later brought in Steve Hannagan, a circus-variety publicist who named Miami "the Magic City" (and later promoted Sun Valley in much the same fashion). Hannagan filled the newspapers with his dreams about Miami, some of which eventually came true.

There were only three automobiles on Miami Beach when Fisher laid out his new city, but he insisted that Lincoln Road be made a hundred feet wide. He envisioned it as an immense shopping thoroughfare and the center of a great city. His foresight of the need for parking space on Lincoln Road was far better than his vision regarding the city's fulcrum. Most of the population and hotel activity are now much farther north. Only two blocks south of Lincoln Road is the start of the area the glamour puffs don't mention, South Beach, which has been left to shift for itself.

Combers of South Beach

South Beach has not shifted well enough to suit anyone but the low-income tourists and five-month Floridians who want to be on the ocean, or near it, at bargain prices. The managers of the palaces a few blocks north sometimes refer to South Beach as the Slums, the Borscht Belt, and the Depressed Area, and "solutions" to its manifold problems are advanced every six months.

Few visitors new to Miami Beach can understand, at first, why South Beach hotels are deplored, for most of them would be proud additions to almost any other city. It is only by comparison with the glittering, multicolored "L" shapes, "T" shapes, and no shapes to the north that the simple rectangles of the low-slung South Beach hotels seem second-class. Their age, too, is held against them. A Miami economist suggests this rule of thumb: "In Miami Beach, after five years a hotel is faded, after ten years it's second-class, after twenty years it's a hovel."

Many long-time patrons of South Beach hotels are happy in them, and finding a comfortable, reasonable place, they visit it every year. Elsewhere on South Beach, where rates

for rooms start at about six dollars a day during the season, there are plenty of patrons who come South by train, bus, or Ford and spend a few hours comparison shopping for rooms, bargaining as they go and not infrequently winning lower rates. Some of them devote a part of the second day to the grocery store—crossing the causeways to Miami supermarkets if they know Miami Beach prices—then cloak the canned goods in department-store shopping bags to get past the room clerk, who usually knows what's going on. The hot plate comes out of the small suitcase, the meal is cooked and eaten, the leftovers go into the small portable refrigerator that came in the wardrobe trunk. Then the South Beach guests either take advantage of the sea, the sand, and the sun, or walk up several blocks to the palatial hotels, where so many of them finger the drapes in the lobbies that the hotel operators sometimes station bellboys to stop them.

Both South Beach and "Back Beach," the latter a tourist term for almost any area away from the ocean front, are dotted with most of the twenty-three thousand apartments, where rates usually begin at $75 a week and $1,500 for the season. There, too, are most of the homes of the fifty thousand permanent residents of Miami Beach. Many of them are the wealthy retired; others spend only the winter months in their Miami Beach homes, maintaining another home in the North. The apartment dwellers and homeowners make full use of the thousands of private swimming pools, and seldom visit the beaches at all, in part because most of the choice beaches, theoretically and legally public, have in fact been taken over by the hotels. Hotel operators advertise "Private Beach," and the Miami Beach city government goes along, apparently on the theory that Santa Claus should be granted privileges.

Indian Summer in the Sand

"Back Beach" is also the spiritual center of a novel approach to the resort business that has attracted hundreds of elderly people with low incomes and has excited sociologists. At least three "retirement hotels" are being operated profitably in large structures that were considered triumphs of the imagination when Miami Beach was younger. Two imitators who bought up "old hotel monstrosities"—the luxury hostels of early Miami Beach days that are several blocks from the water and hence out of the running—have gone broke in the retirement-hotel business, but Charles Lavin, the originator of the concept, has always managed to make a modest profit from his two Miami Beach retirement hotels (perhaps because he is content with a modest profit).

"It's a business proposition," Lavin says, "but it's a business proposition with a heart." Observers who have questioned whether Miami Beach could be given a heart with any kind of surgery were skeptical. But Lavin—who owns or operates more than a dozen retirement hotels in California, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and other cities in Florida—has, at any rate, convinced most of his guests. They pay as little as $65 a month for room and board by sharing accommodations.

At the long, low, pink stucco Monterey, a hundred-room hotel that

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Lavin bought a few years ago for $70,000, there are no "hotel services" worth mentioning—except cooking the meals—that the guests do not provide. But most of the guests are paying less than $3 a day for room and meals, and some of them earn part of that by doing light work a few hours a week on the "petty payroll."

Evenings in the retirement hotels are most often given over to talking, playing cards, or watching television in small groups. The height of entertainment consists of birthday parties and occasional "Talent Nights" featuring seventy- and eighty-year-old guests doing the cakewalk. There are few lights on in the rooms in the early evenings; companionship is more important to the retired than reading.

Marriage, the ultimate in companionship, has resulted so often from hotel friendships that Lavin sometimes lightly protests that he is not running a matrimonial agency. There were more than twenty weddings at Lavin-operated Miami Beach hotels in little more than a year. At the Boulevard, a 260-room giant built by Carl Fisher and converted to a retirement hotel when it could no longer compete for the luxury trade, a sidewalk is labeled "Honeymoon Lane," and the chap who took over the sundry store posted this notice: "Love Letters Written, Short, 25 Cents."

ALL THIS is only a few blocks from the ocean front, but the difference between the relative austerity of South Beach-Back Beach life and that along upper Collins Avenue is marked. The contrast is pointed up by an apocryphal anecdote. A newly wealthy tourist from the North, one who had been a South Beach regular during her less affluent days, arrived at one of the plushest of the new hotels in her chauffeur-driven Cadillac. After overseeing the removal of fourteen new pieces of luggage, she gestured toward the child asleep on the back seat of the car and told the doorman to carry him in. "Why, Madame," the doorman asked, "can't the lad walk?" "Yes," she answered, "but now, thank goodness, he don't have to."

The tribal chieftains of the Kwakiutl Indians, who once lived in west-

ern Canada, would gather at their annual councils and prove their greatness in a competition that involved throwing blanket after blanket on the fire, the greatest chief being the one who disposed of the most wealth. Riding from Lincoln Road north along Collins Avenue, one senses that blankets are being burned there by the millions. Sensitive observers have referred to Collins Avenue's Hotel Row as "Millionaires' Coney Island."

Although there are newer hotels and even costlier ones, the Fontainebleau, the Eden Roc, and the Americana are almost alone in the front rank. They remain there because it is not cost alone but the appearance of never having bothered to count the cost that is the major determinant of status. A mobile cult was following "this year's hotel" when these three were built in 1954, 1955, and 1956. Some of the worshipers moved on as the newer hotels went up, but substantial numbers stayed with the three leaders, in part because they have been the most heavily publicized, but largely because they share a diversely luxurious architecture that can be categorized only as Florida Fantastic.

The Art of Morris Lapidus

Not surprisingly, the Fontainebleau, the Eden Roc, and the Americana were all designed by one richly imaginative architect, Morris Lapidus. After he had drawn the plans for the Italianate Eden Roc and the Frenchy Fontainebleau, Lapidus toured Europe; when he returned from this formative experience, up went the Americana.

The oldest of the three, the $16-million Fontainebleau, is an ivory-colored quarter circle with five acres of Louis XIV gardens and some of the aspect of a Yankee Stadium on the outskirts of Paris. In its arcade of shops, guests who may be paying $175 a day for a suite can buy mink-trimmed sweaters or $20,000 bracelets at midnight, and some of them do. The de luxe cabañas that sweep along a four-tiered "S"-shape beside the ocean have living rooms, bars, and refrigerators. The Fontainebleau offers little, however, with the exception of bidets to supplement conventional plumbing in some suites, that the $14-million Eden Roc can't match. A replica of the Winged Victory stands on the Eden Roc's lawn, and the Louvre-like Mona Lisa Pavilion has facsimiles of some of the world's most famous paintings looking down at the diners.

At the $17-million Americana, which is far up Hotel Row in Bal Harbour on the site of a Second World War machine-gun range, the rooms are equipped with gold-colored telephones on ivory bases, the dressing rooms have side-by-side "His" and "Hers" washbasins, and the management shows its warm-hued bathrooms with the proud explanation that "those second-class Beach hotels just have white tile, no color." Even at capacity, the Americana usually has more employees than guests and promises an average room-service speed of seven minutes and a written report if the bellboy takes longer.

The 160-foot circular lobby is dominated by a terrarium, a glassed-in showcase thirty-five feet in diameter and forty feet high that runs from the floor through the ceiling. Inside is a miniature concrete mountain, volcano-type, twenty-five feet high, that is festooned with small palm and banana trees, tropical vines and flowers, tree ferns, and baby alligators. A sprinkler system rains one hundred gallons of water on the plants every two hours, and overhead bulbs produce artificial moonlight.

The exterior of the Americana has been changing since it was opened in November, 1956, and its owners, Tisch Hotels, Inc., have now completed their ten-year building program. Three thousand tons of coral, which were imported to form a filigree around the grounds, and transplanted tropical foliage are still there, and the basic structure

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of the hotel itself, a straight shot upward relieved by balconies of Panamanian tile that angle off from every room, is also still the same. But a low-slung $1.5-million convention hall now sits beside the original structure, a $3-million addition now rears up like a tower of glass at one end, and the first giant swimming pool, a zigzag shape, got a companion a few months ago—a heated enclosed spa that is a bow to last winter's weather.

'For Class and Mass'

The three leaders and the "great names" of a few years ago—the venerable, celebrity-luring Roney Plaza, with its seven acres of palm gardens, and the "L"-shaped colossus of lime and sugar called the Sans Souci—plus such new hotels as the Deauville, a hill of irregular grids, and the spangled slab of the Carillon, which looks vaguely like the U.N. Building on a toot—gather in many of the rich regulars who make a vacation at Miami Beach an annual ritual. Through shrewd management and advertising, they also attract more than their share of the occasional visitors and the first-timers.

But even among these, and especially among hundreds of lesser hotels, talk of an unhappy transition is increasing, and it goes far back beyond the bad winter season of 1958. Dr. Reinhold P. Wolff, director of the University of Miami Bureau of Business and Economic Research, made a two-year study that involved interviews with more than thirty-five thousand groups of tourists during 1954 and 1955 and found that the average Miami Beach tourist was spending only $11.50 a day. No such statistics are available for earlier years, but Miami Beach old-timers talk nostalgically of the years immediately after the Second World War when big spenders thronged the beaches, dropping hundred-dollar tips for shaves and shoeshines. There are still some of them around—and there are still women wearing expensive furs over bathing suits in any weather—but the emphasis is shifting. Lincoln Road, so posh a street that grocery stores and gas stations were banned from the beginning, is no longer only an avenue of elegance, and the Lincoln Road Foundation marked the change with the announcement that "The brilliant thoroughfare has been transformed into a shopping center for class and mass."

Whether Miami Beach can continue to appeal to class while making its relatively new pitch for mass is debatable. More than one company president, proud of his winter months on the sands, is now being deflated by his thrifty stenographer who took advantage of a "package plan" and spent a week at the same hotel. Package plans that include air transportation, rooms, meals, and entertainment at prices that almost anyone who can afford a vacation can manage are everywhere. The Seville, one of the newest of the front-rank hotels, was offering room and meals for ten dollars a day through October. Only the Americana holds entirely aloof from packages, but, like most of the others, it has opened its exclusive night club doors to anyone who wants to take advantage of an enterprise called Nite Club Tours; Tour No. 1 offers a drink and a complete floor show in the Pompeii Room of the Eden Roc and a midnight snack and a floor show in the Bal Masque Club of the Americana—all for $11.

THERE HAVE BEEN plenty of frowns as scores of low-income tour-takers crowd into the rich surroundings and complaints that Miami Beach has lost its style, is cheapening itself into another Atlantic City.

But it is now evident that Miami Beach is going all the way; it is making a determined bid to become a more substantial if less colorful image, the convention capital of the world.

Going all-out for the convention trade is hastening the collapse of that other Miami Beach of gaudy grandeur. Prospective guests who have seen the trend of the last few years, with multiple conventions where Legionnaire was never meant to tread, are prefacing their requests for room reservations with "You won't have any Elks or things like that there, will you?" There will be Elks and Moose, and perhaps even Democrats and Republicans, if well-laid plans for luring both political conventions in 1960 work out.

The Beach, its instinct for self-preservation finely edged, spent $4 million for a fifteen-thousand-capacity convention hall that has built-in provisions for enlargement, and got so many bookings so rapidly that the huge facility was in use even before it was dedicated in 1958. But as was indicated when fifteen thousand Episcopalians descended on Miami Beach for a convention in October, moving wholesale into the convention trade will require some adapting. A sign in the lobby of the Fontainebleau read "Christian Social Relations in the Boom Boom Room," and a pretty girl in a bikini stepped into an elevator full of high-collared ministers and bishops; the clergymen looked nonchalant, the girl blushed.

THE NEW businesslike atmosphere the convention trade demands has already resulted in a decamping by many who had considered Miami Beach a status symbol. The wealthier collegians, quick to sniff trends, long ago moved their operations, some of which gave whole floors of hotels the aspect of a fraternity house party, up to Fort Lauderdale. The big-name entertainers who call Miami Beach their playland are almost as numerous as ever, but many of them are on hand because they consider it a suburb of Hialeah.

The slow transition of Miami Beach makes few of the owners of the luxury hotels happy, but as one has said, "We may not be the same, but at least we'll be solvent."

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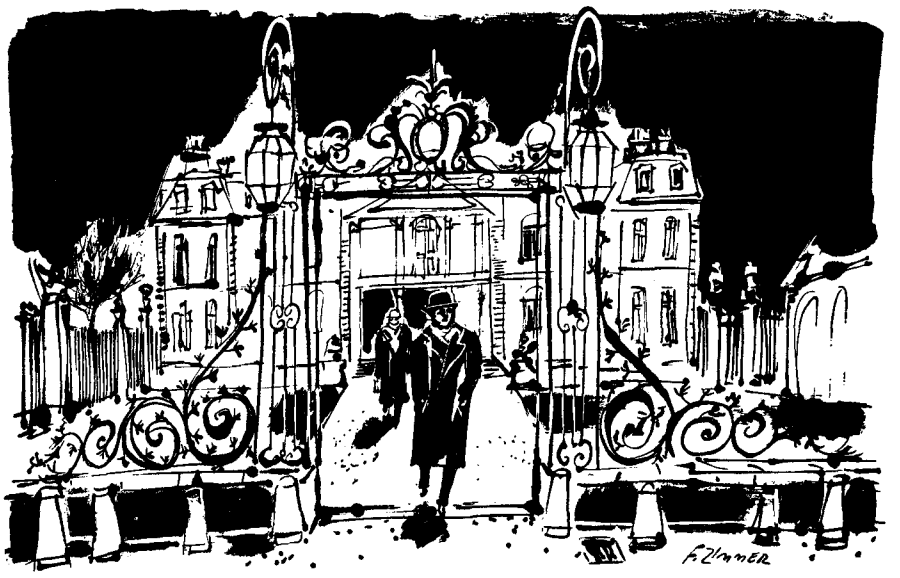

De Gaulle, the Gaullists, And the Organization Men

EDMOND TAYLOR

PARIS

"DE GAULLE did not wish for anything like this. He is probably more distressed than we are by the results of the recent elections."

Whether or not this public statement by former Minister of the Interior Jules Moch, himself a prominent victim of last month's electoral earthquake in France, accurately gauges the general's private feelings about the Gaullist triumph, it reflects the state of post-electoral shock prevailing among French liberals who have hitherto staunchly supported his policies. In fact, many participants in the extraordinary congress of the French Socialist Party where Moch spoke—it was convened here early this month as a kind of post-mortem on the debacle of the Left—voiced alarm rather than mere distress.

Thanks in part to the authoritarian new constitution which de Gaulle imposed despite the misgivings of the liberals, he will be able, as President of the Republic, to mount effective guard over the nation's liberties. He is not obliged either legally or politically to designate a prime minister whose political personality corresponds to the nationalist and rightist majority in the dangerously lopsided National Assembly. Though well over two-thirds of the seats in the assembly—the most reactionary one in French history since the so-called *"chambre introuvable"* of 1815 that sabotaged the enlightened conservatism of Louis XVIII—are filled by "anti-Marxists" of varying shades of violence, enough of them probably put personal loyalty to de Gaulle above ideological passion to make possible the appointment of a moderate premier and cabinet.

The threat to free institutions is therefore probably less grave than the alarmists think. All the same, there is new cause for concern about France's future—at least its medium-term future.

A couple of days after the elections the Communist *L'Humanité* published on its front page a chart showing the varying number of votes needed to elect a single deputy—from 385,000 for a Communist and 79,000 for a Socialist down to 19,000 for a Gaullist. More than eight million first-round votes for the Left and Center Left—Communists, Socialists, Radicals, and splinter groups—finally resulted in the election of sixty-five deputies, while 3,600,000 first-round U.N.R. votes eventually seated 188.

The Right Would Not Yield

De Gaulle abolished proportional representation and restored the so-called *scrutin d'arrondissement,* which essentially resembles the American system of electing congressmen, at the plea of his Socialist and Radical allies in order both to reduce the number of Communist deputies and tame the Gaullist revolution. But the Gaullist and rightist lead on the first round was converted into an overwhelming landslide on the second.

Here a significant pattern emerges. It had been de Gaulle's desire—at least so it was believed in well-informed political circles—that all the "national" parties should cooperate on the second round to defeat the Communists, usually allowing the Socialists to spearhead the drive. Moreover, the general even wanted the U.N.R., where its candidates were running behind the Socialists, to desist in their favor rather than allow the Right to win.

Things turned out differently. Wherever it had a ghost of a chance the U.N.R. maintained its candidates; it ostentatiously—and usually in vain—tried to save a few pet Socialists like Eugène Thomas, the minister of communications, or Robert Lacoste, the former resident minister in Algiers. But all too frequently its candidates participated in a general attack on the Left under the banner of "anti-Marxism."

Despite a widely publicized gentlemen's agreement not to run candidates against the so-called left-wing Gaullists—who quickly established that they were no menace—the U.N.R. indirectly helped the Independents or other right-wingers to liquidate them. One of the most popular left-wing Gaullist candidates, Colonel Roger Barberot, a Free French war hero and loyal follower of de Gaulle, was defeated in Paris by a right-wing candidate, former Paris Police Prefect Jean Baylot, thanks in part to the publication of a letter which Soustelle wrote Baylot declaring that his rival was a well-known crypto-Communist. Barberot immediately sued Baylot for slander

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and won a court judgment, but it came too late to help him.

Adding still another twist to the pattern, the Communists in a significant number of cases actually helped their traditional enemies of the Right to defeat Socialists, left-wing Gaullists, and other liberals. In the first round, several hundred thousand Communist votes had gone spontaneously to Gaullist candidates. In the second round there is good reason to believe that there were secret party orders to vote for the Gaullists or the Right against leading Socialists. The evidence of such Communist-rightist collusion seems to have been particularly clear in Marseilles, where the liberal-minded and popular Socialist Mayor Gaston Defferre, who had worked strenuously for de Gaulle in the constitutional-referendum campaign, was defeated —despite a comfortable first-round lead—by an obscure Gaullist civil servant.

The fact that nearly everywhere the liberal Left was also the victim of its own ideological confusion, its Byzantine doctrinal quarrels—usually about whether de Gaulle's constitution was "fascist"—its anarchic individualism, and its addiction to dated slogans and political techniques only makes the outlook for French democracy all the more uncertain. Dissident Socialists who clearly had no chance on the second round voted for Communists or boycotted the polls rather than try to beat the Right with a left-wing Gaullist or an orthodox Socialist. Radicals frozen in their anachronistic anti-clericalism often voted for Gaullists or Independents rather than elect a liberal Catholic. Right-wing voters on the contrary marched to the polls with disciplined enthusiasm to elect whichever "anti-Marxist" candidate seemed to have the best chance locally.

Merchandising an Aura

In an interview on a short-wave foreign program a few days after the elections, Roger Frey, the U.N.R.'s secretary-general and one of the chief artisans of its victory, outlined the philosophy he had applied to it. "It was a great task of organization, and I think that James Burnham once spoke about this being the age of organizers. I believe that it was necessary to say today that a political movement is only conceivable once it is organized along lines that I might almost call industrial or commercial."

Frey, an affable, smooth, clear-headed businessman-politician in his early forties, is a striking—and strikingly capable—example of a new human type that recent technological and sociological changes in French society have been bringing to the front—the political version of the organization man. His staggering and unforeseen success as the organizer of victory for the Gaullists has raised him out of the mere political-technician class, and his influence in the U.N.R. seems destined to grow, especially since he also serves as a major channel whereby de Gaulle exercises his sway over the party.

Frey's emphasis on the organizational approach, his cult of efficiency, and his tendency to tackle political issues in merchandising rather than in ideological terms do not bother Minister of Information Jacques Soustelle, but they disconcert both the nationalist or authoritarian fa-

natics on the Right of the U.N.R. and the sentimental idealists of its left wing. In choosing U.N.R. candidates for the elections, Frey often scandalized his more traditional-minded associates by passing up old-line militant Gaullists and pinning the U.N.R. colors on the man most likely to win in a particular district, regardless of unsavory previous political affiliations—a technique that goes far to explain why the *scrutin d'arrondissement* failed to check the Gaullist tidal wave. Eventual schisms on both wings of the U.N.R. are possible. But at the moment Frey, in agreement with Soustelle, appears to be in control; and the party, with the backing of the more modernized part of French business, seems likely to develop along the road he has traced for it.

Whether the road will lead in the end to a more domesticated but enduring type of democracy in France, it is impossible even to make a guess at this time. Much doubtless depends on how the new régime tackles the menacing problems that confront it. Few objective observers here believe for example that organizational and merchandising techniques can settle the Algerian problem. Likewise, the nascent industrial recession in France, unless quickly nipped, might crystallize the popular-front sentiments that are in the air since the elections.

ABOVE ALL, there is the problem of foreign policy, with the Soviet threat to Berlin as its most acute element. Despite the traditional Gaullist hostility to the Little Europe formula and the nationalist-neutralist background of some of the new parliamentary leaders, the new government is not apt to be tempted to seek a solution at the sacrifice of western unity. The real danger is that the French, in the throes of the new anti-Communist conformism and under the spell of Franco-German economic co-operation—which no longer carries the taint of "Europeanism" in French nationalist minds—will refuse even to look at the Berlin problem until it is too late.

Here again, de Gaulle, thanks to his personal prestige and the enlarged powers that the constitution of the Fifth Republic gives the head of state, may be able to make good the deficiencies of the Gaullists. The present situation seems to offer him a unique chance to play the star role on the stage of world affairs that he has often given signs of hankering for. Up to the present he has given no direct indication of what his policy might be on the Berlin crisis. But there can be no doubt that he is much concerned about this crisis. It is reported that in recent confidential talks de Gaulle warned his aides to expect armed clashes over Berlin and went on to express the fear that it would be more difficult than most western strategists think to keep such clashes from leading to general thermonuclear war. De Gaulle recognizes the threat. It would be strange if with his intellectual boldness and his sense of history he were not at work trying to devise some means of parrying it.

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The Business Of Christmas Giving

GEORGE J. KIENZLE

As the American businessman dons his Santa suit once again, he is frankly worried: a little about ethics and a lot about cost. It has been estimated that about $2 billion a year is spent on Christmas presents alone for customers, suppliers, and others on whose good will businessmen depend. Many companies have been re-examining their business-gift practices in recent years, and both the Adams-Goldfine case and the recession have lent urgency to the problem.

During a year-long study recently completed by the School of Journalism at Ohio State University, the presidents of the country's five hundred largest industries, fifty major merchandisers, fifty big insurance companies, and fifty biggest banks were polled. The executives were asked to answer the questionnaire personally, not pass it along to a subordinate. Besides answering questions, they were requested to make personal comments. They were promised anonymity.

Nearly a quarter of them replied. They spoke their minds in the bluntest of blunt language. They used words like "blackmail" and "sucker" and "shakedown." They told of gifts ranging from trinkets to Cadillacs to $280,000 in cash to "the loan of a yacht—liquored, fueled, and girled."

Purchasing agents also were interviewed. They talked freely about everything from systematic shakedown to strait-laced refusal to give or receive. They said that this year, more than ever, bosses were on the lookout for loose purchasing to favor free-handed friends. But they also said that the sauce that suppliers pour on the purchasing agent's Christmas pudding is thin compared to the gravy other company executives sop up throughout the year.

The experience of a key executive of one company based in the Midwest shows how the problem develops and how difficult it is to solve. This corporation's business giving began harmlessly enough many years ago. Founded before the First World War, the company grew slowly but steadily, even during the depression. Some time in the 1920's, no one remembers exactly when or how, the company started presenting customers little gifts. They were mostly advertising novelties—pencils, desk calendars, pens, and paper holders. A very special friend or a very important customer might be presented with a ham or a side of bacon or a turkey.

The Second World War put the company in the big time: big government contracts, big volume, big sales costs, big expense accounts, big advertising, big-time public-relations consultants, big salaries, and a big organization. It also brought some innovations in gift-giving practices: black-market items and gray-market practices that violated both the spirit and letter of wartime regulations. Almost unobtainable nylons and scarce cigarettes—hundreds of cartons—were given where they would do the most good. While a meat-hungry public begged the butcher for a steak, farm-killed beef went to some of the big buyers who dealt with the company. Others got theater tickets, hotel rooms, plane tickets, train reservations, evenings at plush New York night spots, Florida trips, tires, gasoline ration stamps, even an auto or two. The old-line executives didn't like this sort of thing, but the pressure of the war and competitive practices salved their consciences somewhat. Besides, who ever heard of necessity being the mother of morality?

There was another angle. The executives hated the excess-profits tax that cut the value of income dollars to about twenty cents. So it seemed foolish not to expand the company's giving as a means of building sound business for the peacetime days ahead. After all, Uncle Sam was footing most of the bill. This later proved to be the company's biggest mistake in its thinking about business giving. As the top man put it: "We figured we had Uncle Sam by the whiskers; actually, we had a bear by the tail!"

Until the end of the Korean War, the company's giving continued on a hit-or-miss basis. Key men throughout the organization took care of people they felt should be remembered. Then the president decided that a study should be made of the company's giving practices. The purpose, he said, was to establish policies that would make giving more equitable, more uniform, and more effective. Actually, he had a suspicion that the whole procedure was a gigantic rathole. He asked all top executives and department heads to submit lists of people they had been giving to, the specific nature of the gifts, and their cost.

That Personal 'Touch'

The lists turned up some amazing information. People who should have been remembered were forgotten. Trusted executives had used the company's generosity to take care of not only customers and important contacts but also personal friends and even relatives. Duplications were both commonplace and comic. One big buyer had commented over cocktails with a group of the company's executives that his favorite pastime was eating popcorn and watching television; that Christmas he got five corn poppers. Gifts ranged all the way from so cheap as to be insulting to so expensive as to raise questions about the motives of both donor and recipient. Some executives bought a wide variety of gifts at retail; others saved money by picking a single type of gift and buying in quantity at wholesale. The total cost ran into six figures and accounted for a sizable share of the company's sales expense.

There, right on the president's desk, was the whole story. But where was the solution? A flat order that no more gifts were to be given was obviously impractical. In some areas the company was facing the toughest competition in its history and was beset by all the pressures that can come when firms get frantic for busi-

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ness. The gift question was considered at top-level executive meetings and at the company's annual sales conference.

Everyone knew the practice was wasteful but no one knew what to do about it. Gifts were a part of the personal touch that often meant the difference between whether you held an account or lost it, whether you made a sale or didn't. Everyone had a few people on his list who could be cut off without too much loss, but most executives—particularly in the sales department—threw up their hands at the prospect of stopping the practice entirely. As one salesman put it: "We might just as well hand over some of our customers to our competitors. I don't like this giving any better than you do. But as long as the competition continues to do it, we're stuck with it, too."

Discussions that lasted for months finally brought forth a mousy decision: all lists should be examined and reduced; new names should be added only with the approval of a key executive; the cost of gifts should be kept reasonable.

Because the president himself had started the whole thing, everyone went through the motions of cutting back. A few who wanted to make an impression slashed ruthlessly and regretted it later; others gave lip service to the economy program but hid the cost of gifts in their expense accounts.

THE OHIO STATE STUDY shows that company presidents throughout the country find themselves in the same spot. Nearly half of the big industrialists say their companies give to customers, suppliers, prospects, public officials, newspaper people, and others. Yet seven out of ten don't like the idea. (Six out of ten flatly disapprove, one out of ten has serious misgivings.)

Why this difference between what companies do and what their presidents believe in? Very simple: money. Nine out of ten say they give "for business benefit" or to "meet competition." The tenth gives as a gesture of good will. The presidents' comments, many of them hand-written, tell the story:

Drug chain: "We give to benefit our business—we hope."

Heavy-equipment manufacturer: "Anyone who doesn't give is out in left field."

Coal mining: "A custom in the industry for many, many years. Benefits actually doubtful."

Steel refiner: "While I disapprove of business gifts, I am practical enough to know that in many cases it is necessary."

Food processor: "It is an expense we would like to eliminate. About all we can do is curtail it."

Machinery maker: "Many gifts are pure gratuities. Some are blackmail. Either kind engenders a sense of obligation which in turn may affect the recipient's business judgment."

Ore mining: "It's outrageous but unavoidable."

Hard-goods company: "It's a shakedown, and we know it. But we're helpless. We're suckers if we do and saps if we don't."

Krass Kringle

When they raise their voices, the executives are reacting against giving; when they raise their eyebrows, they are worried about whether it's more expensive to receive than to give, and they are usually looking in the direction of their own purchasing departments. Buyers know this, and they are concerned; their trade press in recent months has been filled with comment on the subject. Attitudes among purchasing agents themselves range all the way from "much ado about trifles" to "you'll never stop it" to dark warnings that a relapse in business morals is undermining the whole economic structure. A buyer for one of America's largest corporations is said to keep a list of all companies he has dealings with. Those who send gifts continue to get business; those who don't somehow fail to meet the company's specifications. When Christmas is over, the buyer's recreation room is half filled with gifts, ranging from cigarette lighters to expensive cameras.

Purchasing agents involved in such practices apparently feel that top executives are too far from the firing line to suspect what's going on. The Ohio State study shows otherwise. "What is the most expensive gift—which you personally know about—that any company has given to gain a benefit?" the company presidents were asked. Examples of their replies:

Midwestern appliance dealer: "A trip to Jamaica."

Oil refiner: "Fifteen shares of stock, cost $3,500. This was given by a drilling contractor to one of our executives who had awarded him several contracts." (The president didn't say what happened to the executive when he was found out.)

Heavy-equipment manufacturer: "Cadillac to get shipping contract."

Midwest manufacturer: "I have been offered some very attractive trips for my wife and me. Have never accepted any gifts over $20 value and have discouraged all gifts."

Ore producer: "Boat trips and other gifts, $4,000 to $5,000."

Life-insurance man: "Trip to Europe."

Ore refiner: "Furnace for a brand-new house."

Mentioned most often were hi-fis, television sets, automobiles (with Cadillacs far outnumbering other makes), cases of whisky, fancy luggage, trips, hotel accommodations, and lavish entertainment.

CONSCIOUS that the motive behind most business giving is more closely related to larceny than affection, companies have tried to set up safeguards. Convinced that a no-receiving policy isn't wise or won't work, three out of every four companies permit employees to accept gifts of limited value. They offer the rule of thumb attributed to former President Truman: "If you can eat it up, smoke it up, or drink it up in one day, it's all right." Scores of companies send out letters each year asking suppliers not to send gifts. Sometimes this works; often it doesn't. One salesman explained: "When I get one of those don't-send-our-people-gifts letters I become cautious, but I don't quit sending. I know my buyers. I know those who

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are afraid to take gifts in the face of company policy and those that want me to continue sending. I act accordingly. The only change is that the gifts go to the home instead of the office."

Another purchasing agent tells this story: "One year I got a haughty letter from the district manager of a big meat-packing outfit. He told me in no uncertain terms that his company was giving no presents and that his employees had been instructed to receive none. It was one of those butter-won't-melt-in-my-mouth affairs. I passed it around the office for both the amusement and information of the help. Then came a new twist. In less than forty-eight hours a salesman for the packing outfit called on me. He wanted to sell our company hams, turkeys, and slabs of bacon to send friends and customers for Christmas!" «»

Khrushchev's Plan For Seven Fatter Years

GREGORY GROSSMAN

For all the publicity they have been receiving from friend, foe, and neutral alike, the "control figures" (that is, the preliminary outline) of Russia's Seven-Year Plan for 1959-1965 are rather short on surprises. As might have been expected, their theme is the twofold one of catching up with and overtaking the United States economically, and of approaching that ultimate state of economic well-being and social harmony known to the faithful as Communism proper. The guideposts are Khrushchev's well-publicized pet projects. The motto is Haste; the rallying cry, One Last Big Push!; the promised rewards, National Primacy, Abundance, Permanent Peace.

As a document, the control figures do not greatly improve upon the standard of honesty established for such pronouncements in Stalin's day. They are full of statistical stratagems that draw false comparisons with America, depict retardation as acceleration, parade weaknesses as strengths, and posit the fanciful along with the feasible. Some of the principal targets—such as the eighty per cent increase in industrial output over the septennium—are to be taken seriously but not literally; others, as we shall see, should be taken less seriously even as targets, let alone as predictions. The forecast that by 1965 the "socialist countries" will be producing over half the world's industrial output, "which will secure the absolute superiority of socialism over capitalism," deserves a very large dose of skepticism. And, barring economic suicide by ourselves, Khrushchev's assurance to the Soviet people that by 1970 they will have the highest living standard in the world is easily controverted by the plan's own figures, if in no other way. In short, the control figures are a skillful blend of plan and propaganda, of determination and bluff.

"By 1970, or possibly sooner," Khrushchev asserts, "the Soviet Union will have seized first place in the world in terms of per capita production as well as in terms of absolute volume of output." We shall be hearing more and more about "catching up" from now on, though the slogan is as old as the Soviet régime itself. What does it mean? One gathers from Khrushchev that it is very much like a horse race. Thanks to an earlier start, the aging, overweight, and tired American nag is still in front. But the sturdy and spirited Soviet colt is rapidly closing the gap, and the day is near when, for all the world to see, he will forge ahead to snatch the prize, which is no less than history itself.

Needless to say, it is not so simple as this. First, when two economies are roughly in the same class and produce a vast variety of goods in greatly differing proportions, there is no way of determining by exactly how much one economy is ahead of the other. It all depends on how different goods are brought to a common denominator; and as every statistician knows, there are many ways of doing that, each as legitimate as the others, but yielding sharply divergent answers. Whether one country has "caught up" with another or is still far behind depends on the methods—and the honesty—of reckoning. Moreover, if and when the announcement of Soviet victory in the economic race is made, it will be made by the Soviets themselves and it is not likely that we shall be let in on all their figures and methods. Furthermore, sheer statistical parity or any other numerical ratio, however valuable as propaganda, is not decisive for the things that matter: peace, prosperity, power, way of life, and what have you. Turning the international scene into a race track, with himself both jockey and judge, is one of Khrushchev's most artful achievements.

Time and Terminology

The Seven-Year Plan is in large measure an afterthought. In February, 1956, the Twentieth Party Congress (which we remember primarily for Khrushchev's speech cutting Stalin down to size) adopted the outline of a *Five*-Year Plan, the sixth such, to run from 1956 through 1960. This plan called for impressive growth in industry and agriculture, but before the year was up it ran into trouble, for reasons that to western economists looked very much like shortage of means, aggravated by imprudent husbandry. And so in December, 1956, the sixth Five-Year Plan was returned to the planners to have its sights lowered. In September, 1957, it was given up altogether as a full-term plan, and was truncated to three years so that it could be replaced by a Seven-Year Plan, 1959-1965. Why seven years, if such plans have always run for five? Probably to end the plan—as the next regular Five-Year Plan would have ended—in 1965, and, many suspected, also to camouflage the never-admitted failure of the sixth Five-Year Plan.

This suspicion has been now borne out, because contrary to what the Kremlin would have us believe, the Seven-Year Plan slows down the rate of growth in comparison with the now discarded Five-Year Plan. The crucial

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datum is the volume of investment in buildings and equipment. This is now reduced by about ten per cent compared with the investment that would have taken place over the seven years if the expansion rates of the sixth Five-Year Plan had carried through to 1965. Thus the new plan extends over six to seven years the *relative* increase in industrial production that the sixth Five-Year Plan envisaged over five. To put it another way, the new plan foresees for 1965 a level of industrial output some fifteen to twenty per cent below what would have obtained if the growth rates of the Sixth Five-Year Plan had been carried through to that year. In agriculture the targets are pushed back even further.

ALL THIS is not to dismiss the portent of the plan's objectives, especially in heavy industry, or to belittle the huge effort that their achievement will demand. On the contrary, the plan is shot through with a sense of utmost urgency. The pressure on resources is brought out clearly by two things: the cutting back or putting aside of some of the gigantic hydroelectric projects; and (despite fanfare to the contrary) the relatively modest shift in the locational pattern of industry toward the bountiful Promised Land beyond the Urals. In both cases the need to conserve capital and to gain precious time in the race with America decided the issue. To be sure, the pressure on resources could be alleviated, and the rate of industrial growth significantly accelerated, if a considerable portion of the huge volume of resources now going to military ends were released for other uses. But, insofar as the camouflage of the control figures can be penetrated, for example by comparing the targets for metals production and the projected increase in civilian investment, no such intention is apparent.

The imperatives of urgency and of military power combine to perpetuate "the primacy of heavy industry." As in Stalin's day, the so-called heavy and basic industries—especially metals, chemicals, fuel, and machine building—are to receive about nine-tenths of the new investment in industry, and about half of the new investment in the whole economy, over the seven years. If the plan goes reasonably well in this sector the capacity of Soviet industry to produce the economic building blocks of national power—military "hardware" and civilian equipment (though not consumers' durables)—may compare favorably with that of U.S. industry today. Also, Soviet industry is to assume more of an American profile: oil and gas are to gain in relative importance at the expense of coal; the hitherto small synthetics and plastics industry is to be built up rapidly; railroads are to be converted to electric and Diesel power (there is no stress on motor transportation yet); automation is to be pushed.

A Joker in the Deck

This, then, is the core of the plan. To the consumer, the control figures extend promises of rapidly improving conditions. In this connection, the large and concerted effort now under way to alleviate the terrible housing shortage, a consequence of decades of neglect and wartime destruction and of the rapid growth of the urban population, is worthy of note. Should this program be fulfilled, the amount of dwelling space per person in cities and towns will increase in seven years by about one-third—a welcome addition, no doubt, but still a long way from solving the problem. With eloquent guardedness

the control figures state: "The question can now be raised of an individual apartment per family"—meaning a very small one.

The plan proposes to raise real incomes, in the city and on the farm, by about forty per cent on the average. Housing and such things as synthetics apart, this promise largely rests on a projected seventy per cent increase in agricultural output, which in turn depends on achieving the goal of increasing grain production—for food and feed—by as much as a half to two-thirds over what it must lately have been (taking the good years with the bad). The last is the joker in the deck; so much so that the control figures refrain from stating the amount of grain harvested at present. For if this carefully kept secret were now revealed, the unreality of the plan's grain target, and therefore also of the heartening prospect for the consumer, would become evident. True, chiefly by putting vast marginal areas under the plow, Khrushchev was able in four years to increase the grain crop (whims of nature apart) by perhaps as much as a third, and to expand the supply of livestock products considerably on this basis. In addition he was generously favored by the weather in two of the four years. How will the further increase by a half to two-thirds be accomplished? The control figures are conspicuously silent about any new "virgin lands campaigns"—in fact, some retrenchment in the "new lands" is not unlikely—and only speak tersely and unconvincingly of sharply raising yields per acre.

NEVERTHELESS, respectable progress in the average standard of living will undoubtedly come, even if the plan's promises are highly optimistic. Agricultural output will surely respond to the recent and often sensible organizational and planning reforms, and to larger supplies of machinery and fertilizer. Whether the present offensive against the peasants' tiny private plots will contribute to productivity remains to be seen. The reform in farm prices—which incidentally, and contrary to the widespread impression in the West, did *not* remove the peasants' obligation to deliver produce to the state—also has yet to prove itself. The large program for synthetics and plastics will tend, among other things, to reduce the heavy dependence of consumption on the unreliable agricultural base. Also, imports of consumer goods, already appreciable, may continue to increase as the counterpart of the growing Soviet exports to underdeveloped countries.

The benefits of a larger supply of consumers' goods are to be distributed almost entirely to the lowest income brackets: in the city, by nearly doubling minimum wages and raising pensions; in the village, by virtue of the recent reform in agricultural prices. In this Khrushchev is continuing the policy of narrowing income

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inequalities that he has been pursuing since he came to power. With the supply of qualified personnel increasing faster than before and with the standard of living gradually rising, the inequalities introduced by Stalin are surely less justified than ever.

If agriculture is the shakiest prop of the consumer-goods program, the closely related problem of labor poses some of the most serious questions for the success of the plan as a whole. Although the Soviet population is growing by 1.5 per cent a year, the economy cannot count on any considerable increase in manpower over the next seven years (except through the school reform). The young people who are now entering the labor force were born in the 1940's; there are barely enough of them to replace those who are leaving the labor force for normal reasons. Thus, the plan must count on rapid strides in labor productivity to provide all, or nearly all, of the expected increase in output. This means a heavy emphasis on costly mechanization and automation, thus straining investible resources all the more. It also presupposes a sharp rise in labor productivity on the land so as to move several million workers from farming into other jobs, and this of course is tied up with the progress of agriculture.

Catching Up with Father

The much-publicized reduction in the general workweek, outside of farming, from forty-six to forty hours by 1962, and to thirty-five hours by 1968, is undoubtedly highly popular. Long working hours, almost inevitable employment for women, time lost in shopping under Soviet conditions, crowded living quarters—all these now interfere seriously with home life. The extra leisure will be no less welcome than the extra bit of room to spend it in. It is being presented as yet another largesse from the present régime, although forty hours was in fact approximately the standard Soviet workweek between 1928 and 1940. What the fathers won on the eve of the first plan their sons have to regain in the seventh.

It may seem that the cut in working hours belies the existence of a strained labor supply. Yet this is not quite so, for two typically Soviet reasons. The reduction in hours is not automatic; it takes place only if the personnel of the enterprise guarantees to the state that there will be no diminution in output. Secondly, there seems to be a good deal of unpublicized overtime work, some in the same enterprise, some on various "communal" projects. For instance, there is much organized housebuilding after hours and on Sundays.

State vs. Home

The two main objectives of the plan in the social sphere, i.e., the move against the family and the educational reform, probably relate to the labor problem in some measure. A small apartment with her own kitchen (which she now rarely enjoys) and higher earnings by other members of the family could bring the housewife back from the factory or office and keep her at home. This the state cannot afford on a large scale just when "the world-historic victory of socialism" is in the balance: nearly half of all those working outside agriculture, and an even larger proportion in the village, are women. To keep the mother working, the plan provides for a large increase in child-care facilities, all-day schools, and Khrushchev's favorite boarding schools. To free her from the kitchen, the plan promises more and better canteens and restaurants, lower prices there, and delivery of meals to the home. (There are to be no important price reductions except on restaurant meals.) Probably the decision to limit wage increases to the lowest income brackets is also aimed in this direction, because the low-paid worker is more likely than not a woman. By holding up the prospect of periodic large wage increases before the wife while not raising the husband's real earnings (except through promotion, of course), the state may be hoping to keep the woman on the job.

But keeping the woman out of the home is only part of the move against the family, the only major institution in the country not directly under the party's thumb. The other part is keeping the children away from the parents. "It is imperative," the control figures stress, "to raise the role of the state in the upbringing of children. . . . The sooner we place all children in crèches, kindergartens, and boarding schools, the faster and the more successfully will we bring them up in the Communist manner."

The educational reform, ratified by the Central Committee of the party together with the control figures for the plan, provides that the last three years of high school, ages fifteen to eighteen, be combined in varying proportions with active employment. Admission to a university-level institution is to be denied otherwise. While it would be incorrect to attribute the educational reform entirely to the current need for manpower—it has the much wider and more lasting purpose of changing the pattern of skills and remolding attitudes—its immediate effect will be to put millions of young people, who otherwise would stay in school, to work on a part-time or full-time basis.

WILL THE IMPRESSIVE expansion of Soviet industrial capacity, as foreshadowed in the plan, lead to much greater Soviet economic aid to other countries, in or out of the Communist bloc? Or will the plan's pressure on resources place severe limits to such aid? Will China's own "great leap" absorb increasing amounts of Soviet equipment and engineering talent? Or are China's communes and other extreme organizational measures, and the recent hardening of its totalitarian features, signs that Soviet economic help commensurate with Peking's ambition will not be forthcoming?

The control figures do not provide answers to these questions. Needless to say, the international—and the domestic—significance of the control figures lies as much in their publication as in their prospects for realization. For this reason, much as one may take issue with Khrushchev's self-confident predictions, there is little point in an intercontinental duel with crystal balls. A major purpose of the control figures, predictions and all, is clearly to continue the momentum that Khrushchev has been enjoying in the domestic economy, in the power realities at home, in the high councils of Communism, and in the international arena. The plan itself counts among its indispensable resources the ability of its own image to inspire and impress at home and abroad.

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VIEWS & REVIEWS

Edmund Wilson, The Last Patrician—I

NORMAN PODHORETZ

IT WAS DURING the 1870's and 1880's—when a fantastically rapid industrial expansion was changing the character of American life overnight—that the "alienated intellectual" first came into prominence on the American scene, notably among the old families of New York and New England. This was also the period when huge numbers of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe were pouring into the big cities and when ward politics, with its bosses and its colorful corruptions, began to emerge as an important force. "The men in the clubs of social pretension and the men of cultivated taste and easy life," as Theodore Roosevelt described the class from which he came, a class that had traditionally considered public service an honorable calling, were revolted and horrified by the coarseness and crudity of the Gilded Age. And their sons graduating from Harvard and Yale and Princeton in the 1870's and 1880's were hopelessly unprepared to cope with a world so different from the one into which they were born and in whose image they had been educated.

Not far below the surface of some of the high-sounding social criticism produced during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century we can detect a note of simple snobbery aroused by the "vulgar" upstarts who were beginning to dominate the country. (In our own day, a similar attitude has found expression in William Faulkner's chronicle of the displacement of the old aristocracy of the South by the rapacious Snopes clan.) But it was not only the complex of reckless commercialism, political corruption, and meanness of spirit that offended the young patrician intellectual of the 1870's and 1880's. There was also the fear of being swamped by the waves of new immigrants. "A New York boy who goes away to boarding school," wrote John Jay Chapman, "returns to a new world at each vacation. He finds perhaps on his return from boarding school, that the street where he and his companions used to play ball is given over to a migration of Teutons. When he returns from college, the Teutons have vanished and given place to Italians. When he reaches the Law school, behold no more Italians—Polish Jews to the horizon's verge." In the context, Chapman is using this description to make the point that New York is not a civilization but a "railway station," a "kaleidoscope," in which the present has completely obliterated the past—a situation he contrasts with the settled character of New England society, where the link with the classical European culture has never been broken and where "the influx of new blood and new idea has not overwhelmed the old blood and old idea." Although Chapman at this period of his life was not especially antagonistic to the Teutons and Italians and Jews who had been crowding into New York, his tendency to idealize the glories of an older American civilization which had its seat in New England led eventually, in his last years, to an astonishing outburst of xenophobia directed against "the Jesuit and the Jew." Nor was he alone in this: nativist attitudes which had once been the property of vulgar know-nothings were now emblazoned upon the banners of nervous patricians proclaiming the need to protect the salutary homogeneity of American culture.

New Voices

By 1910, however, the situation looked much brighter. Time had both mitigated the excesses of the Gilded Age and equipped the men of cultivation with fresh resources for coping with the challenge to their values. The ideas of Shaw, Wells, Nietzsche, Ruskin, and Morris had filtered in, bringing to the young patrician intellectual a new way of conceiving his predicament and a new confidence in his ability to triumph over the "materialism" of American life. And these ideas joined with the work of the natural-

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ists and realists who had been active in American fiction since the 1880's to produce a demand for liberation from the "Puritan repressions" and the gentility that were the other side of the New England coin. A number of the younger dispossessed patricians called themselves "socialists" and "modernists" and rushed to participate in the exuberant movement (whose headquarters were divided between Greenwich Village and Chicago) to bring about the spiritual regeneration of America through art and craftsmanship.

New voices began to proclaim the birth of a new era and to clamor for a "revolutionary protest against whatever incubuses of crabbed age, paralysis, tyranny, stupidity, sloth, commercialism, lay most heavily upon the people's life." The quotation comes from Van Wyck Brooks, who was to lead a systematic assault on the materialism and priggishness of the Gilded Age in two famous books that indicted America for crushing Mark Twain and for driving Henry James into exile, and who published in 1915 an enormously influential collection of essays called *America's Coming of Age*. Anyone who looks at these essays today is likely to be struck by their relative mildness, which is not a matter of rhetoric or tone but inherent in the argument itself. Though Brooks based a whole theory of American history on the traditional antagonism between "highbrow" and "lowbrow" (an antagonism he traces back to colonial times, taking Jonathan Edwards and Benjamin Franklin as the two opposing archetypes), he also urged a reconciliation between the poet and the professor on the one hand and the businessman and ward politician on the other. "Tammany has quite as much to teach Good Government as Good Government has to teach Tammany," said Brooks, and in saying so, he provided a good measure of the distance the patrician intellectual had traveled since the 1880's. We are a long way indeed from the Henry Adamses and the Henry Jameses and the "men in the clubs of social pretension."

THE MOST DISTINGUISHED member of this second generation of patrician intellectuals was Edmund Wilson. He was born in 1895—about ten years after Brooks—and though he was not strictly of the patrician class, his ancestry (early American Dutch-English stock) and his education (the Hill School and Princeton) associate him firmly with the patrician ethos. One of his grandfathers was a Presbyterian minister and the other a doctor; further back there was a New York State assemblyman who was descended, according to family legend, from one of the Earls of Essex. Wilson's father, Edmund Senior, was a prominent New Jersey lawyer who, though a Republican, won the respect and admiration of Governor Woodrow Wilson by cleaning up the rackets in Atlantic City while serving a term as attorney general of the state.

In "The Author at Sixty," one of those superb autobiographical essays that are among the best things Wilson has written, he provides a good deal of illuminating information about his father's life and character. Edmund Senior was a brilliant and extremely neurotic man who suffered from severe hypochondria and spent all his later years in and out of sanitariums. Wilson ascribes these periodic breakdowns largely to a "fundamental lack of adjustment to the American life of the period." "The period after the Civil War—both banal in a bourgeois way and fantastic with gigantic fortunes—was a difficult one for Americans brought up in the old tradition: the generation of my father and uncles. They had been educated at Exeter and Andover and at eighteenth-century Princeton, and had afterwards been trained, like their fathers, for what had once been called the learned professions; but they had then had to deal with a world in which this kind of education and the kind of ideals it served no longer really counted for much. . . . Of my father's close friends at college, but a single one was left by the time he was in his thirties: all the rest were dead—some had committed suicide. . . . Like many Americans who studied law, [my father] had in his youth aimed at public life . . . But the political career he had hoped for was conceived in the classical republican terms. . . . [and] he could not . . . be induced to take any active part in the kind of political life that he knew at the end of the century."

Though Wilson when he entered college may have imagined himself a rebel against his "reactionary" parent, he was in fact enlisting in the battle to make the values represented by his father's character prevail in American life. The story of his literary career is the story of how he managed to continue waging the fight even after so many of his fellows in arms had either been consumed by fire or had deserted the cause to pursue some other end. Wilson's work cannot be fully understood unless we remember that his voice has aways been the voice of the old Anglo-Saxon America, even when it was insisting on the greatness of Joyce and Proust and Valéry, and even when it was declaring its intense admiration of Marx and Lenin. In Wilson, as in no other writer of the past fifty years, we can see how the old American mind, having recovered itself from the first shock of the post-Civil War days, went on to cope with an America that it passionately felt to be its very own but which became more and more alien to it with the passage of the years.

The 1920's

The young writers of the 1920's were fond of thinking that the great boom was another Gilded Age and that they were its victims just as

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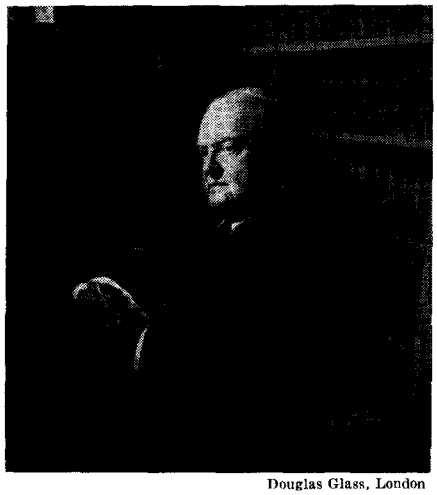
Mark Twain and Henry James and Herman Melville had been victims of the same forces in an earlier day. The truth was, of course, that thirty years of literary and social protest had done a great deal to establish a favorable climate for the new standards in art and morals, with the result that a good many Babbitts were numbered among the admirers of Mencken and Sinclair Lewis and Sherwood Anderson. *Sister Carrie* had been suppressed in 1900, but in the 1920's Dreiser was an American classic; Henry Adams's *Education* amazed the Massachusetts Historical Society by becoming a best-seller after its release to the general public in 1918; and the leader of the "rebellious" younger generation, F. Scott Fitzgerald, was earning huge royalties for his novels and fantastic fees for his stories.

In fact, what seems most enviable today in the writing of the 1920's is its radiant confidence in its own importance, a confidence that owed little or nothing to commercial success and everything to the feeling these writers had of belonging to a community devotedly absorbed in the practice of letters and able to make contact with a responsive audience. Wilson's early journalistic pieces (collected in *The Shores of Light* and *The American Earthquake*) exhibit both this confidence and this sense of community. His attitude toward the new novels and poems he was reviewing from week to week—an attitude that by the new standards of serious literary journalism today can be characterized as receptive, sympathetic, and rigorous all at once—flows directly out of his calm belief that the Republic of Letters has an existence at least as palpable and concrete as the Republic of France.

No doubt the fact the literary people in the 1920's were always so aggressive in asserting the superiority of their values indicates that this belief was less calm than it may appear. Nevertheless there is a difference between losing the luxury of being able to take something for granted and being unable to believe it at all without an unremitting effort of will. (And in that distinction, one may say, lies the difference between the culture of the 1920's and the intellectual life of the 1950's.) The 1920's were still close enough to an age in which the reality of the things of the spirit would no more have been questioned than the reality of the rocks and stones and trees, so that men like Brooks and Wilson, brought up in "the old tradition" and educated as a matter of course in the humane disciplines, might under assault lose their right to an auto-



Douglas Glass, London

matic assumption of the importance of the arts and all that the arts implied, but they would never lose their natural, comfortable, easy relation to the world of books, ideas, and ideals. Nor would they lose the perspective that always accompanies such a relation—the historical point of view, the sense of a perpetually ongoing cultural enterprise from one generation to the next, the feeling that thinkers and writers and artists of all periods are bound together in a common fraternity, and that a new writer who produces a good book is immediately absorbed into the stream of the national literature.

Wilson's early journalistic pieces breathe a natural and easy relation not only to the "fine arts" but to the whole cultural life of his age. He will deal with everything from literature, music, painting, and theater to movies, burlesque shows, vaudeville, murder trials, the character of New York neighborhoods; and whatever the subject, he brings to it the same active intelligence, the same learned interest, the same degree of intellectual seriousness—in short, the same personal identity. The critic who in his book reviews is sufficiently at home in the Republic of Letters to discuss Dante and Catullus and Verlaine without standing on tiptoe, and who analyzes the work of his contemporaries in the same upright posture, is also the man who can without stooping produce an article on Farfariello, who was doing impersonations in Italian at the Fugazy Theater on Houston Street in New York's lower East Side during the month of October, 1925. The assumption that made this feat possible was that all forms of human expression on all levels of literacy exist in a tangible continuum—an assumption that those who came to maturity in the 1930's, 1940's, and 1950's would find it increasingly difficult to make.

'Early American'

Though Wilson returned from the Army in 1919 "full of Wells and Shaw and Barbusse and the Russian Revolution," he did not become deeply involved in political questions until the stock-market crash had justified the worst prophecies of the criers of capitalist doom. Throughout the 1920's he concentrated mainly on cultural matters. He also wrote poetry and fiction and had a play produced by the Provincetown Players, the ancestors of the off-Broadway movement. Wilson's non-discursive writing has always rightly been considered inferior to his essays, and it may be that the key to that inferiority lies in the discrepancy one can detect between his character, which seems essentially rigid and closed, and his mind, which is open and unstintedly generous. His poetry, for example, has a curiously old-fashioned, almost pre-Raphaelite quality that contrasts sharply with the attempt to be modernist in the use of homely images and harsh speech rhythms. His criticism, on the other hand, is almost always marked by a marvelously effective balance in which his character operates to set limits to the infinite receptiveness of his intelligence.

A striking illustration of how this balance functions can be found in *Axel's Castle* (1931), where Wilson's intense excitement over a group of writers he was trying to sell to a reluctant public never for a moment clouded the grounds of his

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resistance to certain elements of their work. Not the least interesting aspect of *Axel's Castle*—and the one that makes this great critical study of the symbolist movement a work of literature in its own right—is the spectacle it presents of a stubbornly rationalistic temperament, a temperament almost aggressive in its secularism, in its friendliness toward science, in its conviction of the possibility of progress through the efforts of human will, successfully grappling with a literary school most of whose members would have identified his point of view with the very forces they were condemning and who would have drawn from their own artistic achievements the very opposite moral.

THUS, for example, instead of agreeing with Valéry that the obscurity and extreme subjectivism of modern literature constitute the first stage in a process that will end with the transformation of poetry into a sort of harmless esoteric game for connoisseurs, Wilson asserts that on the contrary symbolist literature might prove to be an immensely important step in the orientation of modern man toward a view of reality that would re-establish the power of ideas and ideals in everyday life. He sees in the new forms developed by the symbolists "a revolution analogous to that which has taken place in science and philosophy: they have broken out of the old mechanistic routine, they have disintegrated the old materialism, and they have revealed to the imagination a new flexibility and freedom." T. S. Eliot's religiosity, Yeats's magic, Valéry's rarefied speculations, Proust's "fretting self-centered prolixities," Joyce's over-intellectuality—all are permitted by Wilson to derive no authority whatever from the great works of art which these writers succeeded in producing. Indeed, he regards the qualities and ideas that repel him as products of the dying era that the symbolists have been helping to kill—the tax, as it were, imposed on the service they have performed for a humanity bent on marching toward "the hope and exaltation of the untried, unsuspected possibilities of human thought and art." Here speaks the Puritan tradition, with its belief in independence, self-reliance, steadfastness, and hard work, thundering approval of men who might so easily have been written off by a mere Puritan as whiners and idle dreamers.

THE MORAL of the whole story, at any rate, is early American to the bone. The world, Wilson says, has changed a great deal since 1920, especially as a result of the Russian Revolution, and "the question begins to press us again as to whether it is possible to make a practical success of human society, and whether, if we continue to fail, a few masterpieces, however profound or noble, will be able to make life worth living even for the few people in a position to enjoy them." A book celebrating symbolist literature that ends with the determination to "make a practical success of human society" surely could never have been written by a man who was a thoroughgoing avant-gardist, any more than the extraordinarily sympathetic and lucid exposition of the difficult novels and poems discussed in *Axel's Castle* could have been done by an old-fashioned American rationalist alone.

BOOKS BY EDMUND WILSON CURRENTLY IN PRINT

THE AMERICAN EARTHQUAKE. *Doubleday. $6.*
AXEL'S CASTLE. *Scribner. $3.95; *$1.45.*
CLASSICS AND COMMERCIALS. *Farrar, Straus. $5.*
*EIGHT ESSAYS. *Doubleday (Anchor Books). $0.85.*
FIVE PLAYS: CYPRIAN'S PRAYER, THE CRIME IN THE WHISTLER ROOM, THIS ROOM AND THIS GIN AND THESE SANDWICHES, BEPPO AND BETH, THE LITTLE BLUE LIGHT. *Farrar, Straus. $6.50.*
*A LITERARY CHRONICLE: 1920-1950. *Doubleday (Anchor Books). $1.25.*
THE LITTLE BLUE LIGHT. *Farrar, Straus. $3.*
A PIECE OF MY MIND: REFLECTIONS AT SIXTY. *Farrar, Straus. $3.75.* Also **Doubleday (Anchor Books). $0.95.*
RED, BLACK, BLOND AND OLIVE. *Oxford University Press. $6.75.*
THE SCROLLS FROM THE DEAD SEA. *Oxford University Press. $3.25.*
THE SHORES OF LIGHT. *Farrar, Straus. $6.50.*
*TO THE FINLAND STATION, *Doubleday (Anchor Books). $1.25.*
TRIPLE THINKERS (revised edition). *Oxford University Press. $5.50.*
THE WOUND AND THE BOW: SEVEN STUDIES IN LITERATURE, *Oxford University Press, $5.50.*
THE SHOCK OF RECOGNITION, edited by Edmund Wilson. *Farrar, Straus. $6.50.* Also **Grosset & Dunlap, 2 Volumes, $1.45 each.*

*Paperbacks.

Many followers of the New Criticism—the school that grew directly out of the aesthetic theories on which symbolist literature was based, and which rose to dominance in the universities and the quarterlies on the shoulders of the new wave of enthusiasm for Eliot and Joyce and Yeats and Proust that developed in the years following the Second World War—have come to consider *Axel's Castle* a work of "mere" popularization. This judgment not only overlooks the high distinction of the book but also serves to register the great distance between the literary life of the 1920's and that of the 1940's and 1950's. Wilson could still believe in the existence of a general reading public literate enough to understand a complicated exposition and willing to take the trouble to grapple with what must have seemed hopelessly obscure texts; and the New Critics could not. Indeed, the increasing specialization and narrowing of focus within American intellectual life since the end of the 1920's, particularly in the last fifteen years, itself grows out of the disappearance of such a public.

Or is it something else that has disappeared? For it may be that the "common reader" is as much—or as little—a reality today as he was thirty years ago, and that Wilson and others like him were able to assume the existence of an interested general audience only because they believed so strongly in the relevance to all men of the things they were writing about. And it may also be that this belief derived from their stubborn refusal to admit—as the New Critics, and not they alone, implicitly admit—the doom of the arts in our time. That "popularizations" as good as *Axel's Castle* are no longer produced, in other words, may be another sign of the loss of confidence by writers in the value of their own vocation.

(This is the first installment of a two-part essay.)

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The 'Bauletto' of Uncle Vittorio

Memories of a clear conscience in troubled times

ANTONIO BAROLINI

YEARS AGO, among the old Veneto families of agricultural tradition to which my maternal grandparents belonged, it was the practice to buy, with the anticipation of each new baby in a family, a little trunk that would serve first for assembling the child's layette, then a portmanteau on his trips to and from boarding school, and finally a reposing place in the garret for the elaborate outfit of his wedding day. The use was so ingrained that even in the times of my own infancy, when each newborn child was no longer presented with his own little trunk, its role was transmuted to explain where babies came from. We children were never told that a new sister or cousin was found in the garden under a cabbage leaf or brought by the stork. We were simply told, "The little trunk has been sent off to heaven—it will be back soon with a new baby."

In 1881 my mother's father bought the *bauletto* intended for his second-born child, who was my Uncle Vittorio. (*Bauletto* it was always called because it was in fact a miniature *baule,* a little trunk with a rounded cover like a pirate's coffer and rings on each end for hoisting it atop carriages.) When I married, the little trunk came with me from my mother's house to my new home; Uncle Vittorio was dead by that time. It now stands in my attic, a memento of Uncle Vittorio. It also tells, at least to me, a little tale of liberty in our sour times.

UNCLE VITTORIO was a civil engineer. He came from a bourgeois landowning family that adhered to the principle of the division of property by which each son came into possession of a certain amount of land: never more, never less. If there happened to be not enough, the difference was made up by new acquisitions. If too much, the surplus was left to the priest in the family since it was customary that one son in every generation should be ordained—just as, in every generation, there was the son who became a lawyer or notary because it was generally useful to the family to have on hand someone technically familiar with the law. As for engineers, their utility was not yet recognized by Uncle Vittorio's family, and in becoming one he made his first break with custom.

In this old farming family, moreover, the inheritance of sons who entered professions was reduced by that amount of land which corresponded to the cost of their studies. In this case, too, the difference went to the priest, whose patrimony naturally ended up by being the largest. He, in turn, was pledged to leave the whole inheritance to that nephew who entered the priesthood. This system had functioned so well in the family for so long a time that it usually worked automatically with each new coming of age. The first signs of changing times came with Uncle Vittorio's generation and his defection in particular. The old family priest of those days had always felt that Uncle Vittorio's graveness, devotion, and classical studies best suited him, of all the nephews, for an ecclesiastical career. It was a great disappointment for the old priest, canon in a small town near Vicenza, to be approaching the end of his life without having earned the merit of leading a nephew into the Church.

The canon was a good country priest who had loved hunting in his day and knew that Uncle Vittorio did, too. This made it the harder for him to understand how Uncle Vittorio, being of a religious nature, and having the possibility of inheriting his lands, his hunting preserve, and his house—plus the prospect of eternal salvation—had nonetheless made no move to enter the priesthood. "It's all the fault of that Liberalist name his father gave him," the old canon claimed, still embittered by Vittorio Emanuele II's seizure of papal lands in the unification of Italy.

As a last resort, the canon called Uncle Vittorio to his home in the Euganean Hills. He walked with Uncle Vittorio up the path of a wooded hill behind his home, where from the top of the hill the two looked down at the stretch of fields in the valley and the walls and church tower of the town. "Look," said the priest, "what a marvel the Lord sets before your eyes. And think what a great slice of these wonders He would like to give you if you would serve Him as I have!"

Uncle Vittorio was very young and very quickly nettled at the ingenuous words of the priest. "When Jesus was led up the mountain and tempted with such sights He told Satan to get behind Him," said Uncle Vittorio. And then, noting the confusion of the poor canon, he added more gently, "Besides, reverend uncle, I want to get married."

And so it was that Uncle Vittorio lost his chance for the priestly inheritance, while the canon reconciled himself to the fact that if there were no new priest in the family, at least there would not be a bad one.

WHEN Uncle Vittorio came into possession of his own modest quota of land, he administered it with the enthusiasm of an enlightened city gentleman, convinced that the land needed the supervision of an educated owner as much as strong arms and backs to work it. His farm, said Uncle Vittorio, was not just a reservoir of foodstuffs, it was an experiment in progress. It was not enough to possess fields and cultivate them in the old way; land had to be worked intelligently with all the technical expedients of the modern age. According to his simple reasoning, in his kind of intelligent farm

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administration lay all the justification of private property that was needed to oppose successfully the no less simple socialism that was current before the First World War. It was almost redundantly clear to Uncle Vittorio that with sober management and a Christian concept of "the just reward," any foolish revolutionary ideas would be defeated before they were ever fully born. "That nonsense about social man being contentious—that '*homo homini lupus*' of Hobbes—is a heresy that only an Englishman could have invented," Uncle Vittorio would exclaim indignantly. "Man, if well treated, always prefers to be a lamb, not a wolf." He had a very personal, sometimes discordant bundle of phrases, religious convictions, and philosophic approaches to bolster his arguments, and from a synthesis of them one thing was outstandingly clear to him: it was no longer enough to be a farming priest or notary, one had to be at least an engineer. "This is the era of the technician, even in agriculture," he repeated at family gatherings, to the discomfort of his farmer cousins.

Uncle Vittorio was thin and energetic. He was not tall, but his neck was long and always held rigid within a high starched collar that gave him a kind of imposing stature. He wore a florid moustache and a pince-nez, and taken all together he had a noble face. He was witty and quick, except when pronouncing solemn ideas. His was the culture of the middle class, part *accademia* and part good sense. His aristocracy of spirit kept him, a confirmed bourgeois, unconformist and free. In his time, and among his class, his ideas were considered extremely advanced and original.

Uncle Vittorio's first dose of applied culture was acquired at boarding school twenty kilometers from his home where he was first sent at the age of ten. His little trunk accompanied him when he went off, as they said, "to a place less indulgent than home." It went filled with well-ironed garments that bore the odor of fields, of games, of hurdled hedges and thrown stones, of everything that is childhood and the gentleness of a home that nurtured childhood. It returned the same belongings ill-kept and misshapen, full of mortification and discipline and pride of duty.

The same trunk, in the same capacity, accompanied me about thirty years later to Uncle Vittorio's old school. I remember seeing it through the rear window of the carriage as

it jolted above the wheels on a rainy fall day like a relic washed up from the seas. As the rain poured down and troubled my imagination, I heard again the echo of valid reasons Uncle Vittorio had given my widowed mother right up to the moment of the departure. He wanted to encourage her and help her bear the necessary sacrifice of separation that, according to him, my education imposed.

"If I am what I am," he had said, "I owe it to the same principles I acquired in the same school where you are sending your son." And then he turned to me and said, "My boy, you're like a son to me and I've given you the same little trunk I went off to school with. Be good, and it will bring you luck."

As for Uncle Vittorio's "If I am what I am," this referred to his being at that time a notable exponent of local government, constantly entrusted with official tasks and always on the point of becoming mayor of the town. He liked to make public pronouncements and send grandly worded and authoritative letters to the provincial newspaper on all manner of subjects. Once, in the exceptionally severe winter of 1907, coming out of church after late Mass, Uncle Vittorio had heard someone grumble loudly, "The cold in this church is unbearable—worse than it has ever been. That's what comes of opening up the Simplon Pass and letting all the cold drafts of the Alps down upon us!" And Uncle Vittorio, to whom the newly opened pass was a triumph of engineering progress, had retorted as usual with a letter of protest to the daily paper. "Incredible! Absurd!," he had written in a fine show of scientific righteousness. And it was clear that what was just a case of provincial small talk was magnified by him into a specter of reactionary ignorance, just as Don Quixote had turned windmills to giants.

In his mixture of authority, candor, competence, and pedantry all put together, Uncle Vittorio was a product of his time and his place and, even more, a prototype of the man with the "clear conscience." As an unpaid consultant of the municipal transportation system, he had the right of free passage at all times on the horse-drawn cars. But in accordance with his own code he would use his privilege only when he used the cars for reasons pertaining to his consultancy—that is, almost never. This not only irritated his colleages in the administration, but unfailingly brought him into discussions with the car conductors, who knew his official capacity and never wanted to take his money. For Uncle Vittorio the value of truth and honesty could only coincide with their literalness, and he could never see how rhetorical his insistence on this was.

When the First World War exploded into his life, Uncle Vittorio, who as an engineer understood the potency of new armaments and above all of aviation, was sure that it would be cleared up shortly; he served in the army with the rank of lieutenant. The war was different from his expectation of it. But when it was won and he came home again, the world he returned to appeared no different from what it had been before; it seemed enough to put away his uniform in the little trunk, get back to work, and say, "Thank God, this too is over!"

It was soon after, in 1920, that he decided to put a property he owned up for sale. And when he was offered what seemed to him too high a price (despite the inflation which followed the war), he told the would-be purchaser, "No, sir, I have no intention of robbing anyone! Your offer is too high. Any of those panicky people who have no faith in the

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recovery of the lira might accept your offer, but I'd feel dishonest if I did. Ten thousand lire less than what you mentioned is enough for me!" This declaration made the prospective buyer so suspicious that he almost backed out of the deal (and it would have been better for Uncle Vittorio if he had); before he went ahead he made new inquiries about Uncle Vittorio and asked for new guarantees and concessions. Uncle Vittorio was extremely put out by this and would often refer to the matter. "There you have an example of the times," he would fume. "In being honest and doing one's duty, one is practically insulted. The war has destroyed all moral values! It's time for all straight-thinking men to unite in a crusade for honesty, both public and personal." In perfectly good faith Uncle Vittorio proclaimed these words from his repertory of solemn ideas just a year or so before Fascism loomed on the Italian horizon. When it finally arrived Fascism seemed the very instrument of redress that the honest needed to redeem national moral values and keep Communism in check.

"Communism," Uncle Vittorio would say knowingly, "is a terrible storm, but it has the life of a storm. Where it touches, it destroys. But it can't last long—if only because, economically speaking, it's nonsense."

IF INDEED Communism was to have lasted twenty-four hours, Fascism, according to Uncle Vittorio, would have lasted no more than twenty-five—just the time needed to defend the citizens' liberty against the prevalent threats and incorporate itself within the existing framework of government, strengthening and liberalizing it before passing on, like a catalytic agent that has performed its task. Many of the old governing class, educated in the values of the prewar world, more politically expert and responsible than Uncle Vittorio, took twenty years to wake from this lazy dream. It didn't take Uncle Vittorio so long.

His awakening came the day in 1924 when Giacomo Matteotti, the leader of the Social Democratic opposition in parliament, was assassinated by a gang of Fascists. In the face of this brutality and horror, the liberal-nationalist-democratic fervor of Uncle Vittorio was shaken to the core. He clearly saw Fascism as an ordinary and vulgar dictatorship instead of a political synthesis of all his separate beliefs.

It had been Uncle Vittorio's habit to stop by our house once or twice a week after work, on his way home, to chat with my mother. And it was with an air of great depression that he stopped by the evening following the Matteotti affair. *"Mea culpa,"* he said sadly. "I put my trust in men who abused it. I gave public support to brutes and now I must make amends and say that I was mistaken—that they do not merit the support of gentlemen. The situation is clear."

I WAS ABOUT FOURTEEN at the time and not at all interested in political matters, but when I started to leave the room Uncle Vittorio motioned me to stay. There were, he said, political interests from which no man or boy can be exempt. And given the age we were living in, it was better I learned certain things in time. And so I stayed and listened uncomfortably as the discussion went on. When my mother spoke to him of prudence and tact, he retorted with illustrations from Tacitus and Cicero. It wasn't until he was leaving that Uncle Vittorio became serene again. "Oh," he said lightly, "I almost forgot to tell you—there's good news with the bad. Laura and I have sent away the little trunk. This time it's going to be a boy."

My mother was jubilant. "Why didn't you tell me before?" she said, taking his hands. "All for politics, you forget the important things!"

"You're right," said Uncle Vittorio. "I'm sorry these are bad times for my son, but we'll need people with backbone from now on."

Some weeks after this, the walls of our town were plastered with printed notices from which it could be learned that Uncle Vittorio was a vile traitor to heroic ideals. What had Uncle Vittorio done? He had tried to make a public protest against the Matteotti crime. And the terrifying thing now was not the derision or threats to which he was constantly exposed, or the defection of friends who either abandoned him completely or avoided him publicly, or the hoodlums who spat on the ground when he passed or even pushed him from his bicycle as he turned a corner; it was, instead, the sudden discovery of the emptiness and rot that lay under the marvelous crust of ideas with which he had nourished himself and of whose substance he had been absolutely certain. "This is a carnival," he said one evening, "a carnival that will end badly. What sad times for a baby to come into! I would like to have had the air serene for my son's coming, but the *bauletto* will be back shortly—it isn't, after all, such a long trip." This figurative use of the *bauletto* had always seemed to me, with my typical adolescent pedantry, a sickly euphemism. But that evening, associated as the little trunk was in my mind with the political misfortunes of Uncle Vittorio, I saw it for the first time as a dominant note of grace in the meanness of an unjust world.

For Uncle Vittorio, mocked at, deprived of his right to work on public contracts, suspended from municipal

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activities, and forced to sell his lands one after the other to meet expenses, the little trunk made other trips in the years that followed. And each time it returned, it brought him a daughter. He consoled himself by saying that girls, for him, were as good as boys and the times were changing for women in the world, too. Nevertheless, we all knew that every daughter that was born only increased his desire for a son and embittered his struggle against an enemy stronger by far than he. With each daughter his shoulders sagged a little more and his hair got a little grayer. Yet spiritually he was as vigorous as ever. And he was almost as jovial as in the old days when he stopped by our house one evening in 1931 and said, "Well, we've sent off the little trunk again."

"What!" said my mother, who was really aghast this time. "With the worries you have! What can you and Laura be thinking of?"

"If you had sufficient faith in Providence you wouldn't talk like that," he answered imperturbably. "And besides, I'm getting along in years—it's time my son made up his mind to come."

WHAT we didn't know that evening was that a few days before Uncle Vittorio had sent a registered letter to Benito Mussolini which said: "I find it unjust, as a taxpaying citizen, as the father of six children, and as an ex-combatant, to be deprived of my right to work simply because I dissent completely and unalterably from your policies. This is the height of outrage, even for a dictatorship."

There are moments in which such candor must have a fascination for tyrants; all the more so since their acts of magnanimity are actually a new affirmation of their power. At any rate, the little trunk hadn't returned yet with the new baby when my uncle received word that the local authorities had been instructed to readmit him on the official rolls as a practicing engineer. His emotion was such at the announcement of this barely hoped-for news that he was stricken with a heart attack. His last words were, "*Beh*, now things are beginning to look better!"

His son was born five months after his death and was named Vittorio.

CHANNELS

Dead Turkeys

MARYA MANNES

IF THE BEST in television deserves applause and the mediocre oblivion, the horrid fascination exerted by the worst must be recorded for the insight it affords into a particular kind of human squalor. In this category, which includes shows like "Queen for a Day" and the defunct "Strike It Rich," I would surely put the late "Bride and Groom" and the later "Chance for Romance" at the top of the list.

"Bride and Groom" was a lulu. Every afternoon a young man and woman would be united in holy wedlock right before your eyes in a television chapel, with a real minister and real tears glistening on the bride's cheek and a real Adam's apple bobbing up and down the groom's neck and an appalling tenor with damp hair and a plunging collar singing "I Love You Truly." Before this touchingly exposed plighting of troths, there would be an interview of the tremulous or numbed couple by a master of ceremonies who combined avuncular cheer with the moist piety affected by funeral-parlor attendants.

I remember with particular joy an occasion after the M.C. asked the bride, "Now where did you first fall in love with Bob?" and she said, smiling prettily, "At school," and the M.C. said, "And where was that, Ella May?," and she said with an air of pride, "Embalming school—we're both planning to be undertakers." "Ha, ha!" laughed the M.C.. "Now how do you like that, folks!" This is great television.

THERE WAS a different kind of fun on ABC-TV's "Chance for Romance," which began in October and expired this month. Billed as "an innovation in television programming which will extend a chance for sincere friendship to mature unmarried men and women," it opened daily with a close-up of two very clean pigeons, billing if not cooing. Having seen them in the feather, I can report that their feet were tied to their perch, that nobody knew what sex they were, and that they were outrageous hams. Two seconds before air time they were busy plucking nits out of their tails, and the moment the lights were on them and a fruity voice intoned "Chance for Romance," they put their heads together and peered into the camera.

The birds having set the tone, John Cameron Swayze, who once read the news and still wears a boutonniere, sang in pitch. In a voice both grave and gay, lubricated with sincerity, Mr. Swayze explained how the show permitted "matoor" men and women to form "lasting relationships," went into a baby-food commercial, and then introduced a grandmother on the prowl.

The Lady and the Tigers

But before we introduce her to Bill, Joe, and Vince, as Mr. Swayze would say, let us explain how "Chance for Romance" worked.

You were, shall we say, a widow of middle age and rugged health who found no male companionship in the town or suburb you inhabited. Time hung heavy, life was far from lived out, and having looked at "Chance," you wrote a letter to the program telling all about yourself and enclosing a snapshot. If you looked presentable and betrayed no marked aberrations in your writing, you might be summoned to New York to be screened by "three certified psychologists." If you passed the various tests they gave you (kept secret to prevent cramming), you were notified of the day of your appearance on the program. In the meantime, several suitable potential mates were picked for you by the psychologists from among the male correspondents.

On the premiere of "Chance for Romance," the three psychologists—Dr. Helen Hall Jennings, Associate

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Professor of Education at Brooklyn College; Dr. Irving R. Stuart, Assistant Professor of Psychology at Hunter College; and Dr. Patricia Jackson, Assistant Professor of Education at the same institution—rather nervously explained the basis of their choice. Pupils flickering with the teleprompter, they emphasized the need for matoority, for similarity of background, for mutual interests.

THEY were never seen again. Instead, each of them devoted from eight to ten hours a week screening letters and matching companions at an office away from the studio.

It is no surprise that seventy per cent of the mail—which averaged from 150 to 300 letters a day—came from women. The surprise is in the quality of so many of the letters and the apparent decency of so many of the women. Widows, divorcees, grandmothers, many of them well educated, with professional status in fields like teaching, research, secretarial work, and selling—and all consumed with loneliness.

"Desperate SOS," wrote one woman, "from a Golden Ager in danger of being swallowed up in a completely feminine world."

"The predominant conclusion," said Dr. Jackson, "is that the country is full of attractive intelligent women of middle age and over who have much to give and no one to share it with, who seem to have no access to companionship except with other women. They're not out for money, they're not even out for sex—they just crave the society of men and some outside stimulation."

She added that with the men it was, of course, different. A man could almost always find companionship no matter how old he was or where he lived, so a lot of the letters from men were animated more by a spirit of adventure—a "dare"—than by visions of "lasting relationships."

"But here again," according to Dr. Jackson, "we found very few indications of ulterior motive. The men weren't out for a rich woman or a meal ticket. They just wanted to try something new."

They were also very definite about what they wanted to try.

"I prefer going out with non-college girls," wrote one, "as I generally find them more honest, frank, and sincere than college girls."

Another man hoped fervently that his prospective date would share his absorption in "space, Gandhi, and international politics," while a granite-faced fellow in a hunting cap, admitting that he was no beauty and lacked social graces, demanded a woman who did not smoke, drink, or chatter, but who enjoyed cooking in cabins and galleys, the wilderness, hiking, hunting, fishing, square dancing, and God.

The psychologists failed to find his soul mate.

"Naturally," said the producer, "we threw out the queers and the phonies. We were very careful about having balanced people on the program. It had to be kept in good taste."

Grandma and Her Victims

In spite of the screening and the tests, however, the nice letters and the discreet aims, squalor seeped into the show. The reason, except to psychologists, was really very simple. There must be something faintly or deeply the matter with anybody who hopes to find a private solution in public. And although I did see two or three women on the show who seemed both pleasant and intelligent, and a man or two who provided a certain documentary interest, there were some pretty frightening specimens. I remember one woman with particular horror. Thrice married, a grandmother, and presumably in her sixties, she had the legs—carefully exposed—of a young woman and the face—carefully preserved—of Hecate: her mouth was a rouged scar and her gaze avid.

Lovingly drawn out by the master of ceremonies, who appeared to relish the exploration, she told how her second husband, a retired sergeant, "brought the Army into the home with him," "beat the devil" out of her regularly, and played Russian roulette with the revolver pointed against *her* head. I forget the idiosyncrasies of her other mates, but I somehow found myself pitying them.

Mrs. C., as we shall call her, was then introduced to her potential companions, or should I say victims. The procedure was simple. She faced three doors behind which the gentlemen were herded. Each one was summoned separately by his first name and walked out of his own door. The camera then switched to the look of appraisal in the lady's eye, and this was something to chill the soul. With Mr. Swayze as moderator, Bill and Linda exchanged a few polite questions—"Do you have any hobbies?" "How do you like your steak?"—after which Mr. Swayze banished Bill through his door and summoned Vince. After all three had been cased and banished, the lady was sent out in another direction and other candidates were worked in between the commercials.

The deal was that each woman went out for the evening with the three men: Bill for cocktails, Jim for dinner, all three for a show, and all four chaperoned by a program official. The next day they came back to the show and Mr. Swayze asked them, separately, how they liked each other. The tone was kept very high:

"Jack is very interesting. We went to the Museum of Modern Art and he knows a lot about the impressionists."

"I found Alice very educated. We talked about the theater."

Only one woman, when asked

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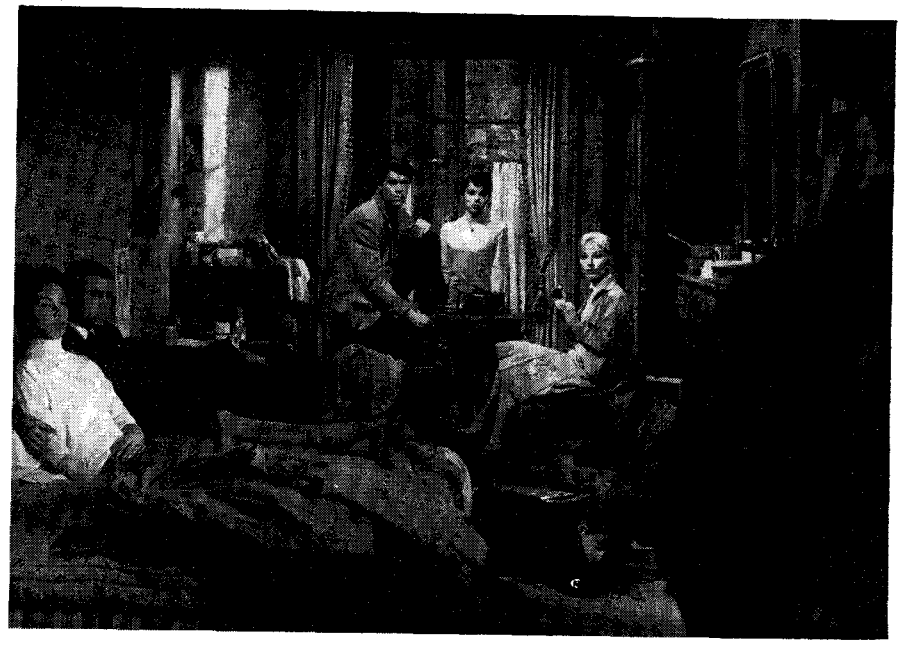
the topic discussed, said, "My life. Gus wants to write my biography." Gus was a writer unknown to this correspondent.

The participants were then treated to some glutinous observations from Mr. Swayze, several commercials, and photographs of themselves—draped in leis and laughing gaily—taken on their three-stage introductory course. The climax of "Chance for Romance" was the moment when the woman involved chose the one or two men of the three she wished to see again. These doomed men were summoned out of their doors and marched gaily off the set with Alice or Sue.

After that, they were on their own. "We had no follow-up," said the psychologists, "although we do know of one case where a couple on the show did get married." They added, not without a certain embarrassment, that the woman in question had hooked up with one of the men picked for somebody else. Natural selection, in other words, triumphed over the tests.

IN SHOWS like this, the squalor is compounded by the technique of television itself, which is a messy one wholly devoid of backstage glamor. Forty lights, thirty people, and ganglia of cables looping around the floor; a forest of equipment, flimsy sets, phony props, and young directors with earphones who bring a ludicrous urgency to the trivial because of the moving minute hand; cue girls holding up idiot boards to remind announcers that it's mild for baby's skin; and ten men hanging around the set with no apparent function but to draw pay—all this might be an acceptable periphery for a center of value. But when it surrounds a format like "Chance for Romance," it becomes a monument to waste; the prime sin, I feel sure, of television.

Ah well. There's comfort in the fact that the worst has numbered days, even on television. And there's even more comfort in the memory of a recent Sunday when one splendid hour followed another: Leonard Bernstein and Beethoven, Art Carney and *Peter and the Wolf*, Harry Truman and history, Rosalind Russell and *Wonderful Town*. They made up for a lot of things.



MOVIES

La Génération 'Beat'

EDMOND TAYLOR

PARIS

ONE EVENING during the recent electoral campaign I took time off from covering political rallies to see Marcel Carné's *Les Tricheurs*, a celluloid soap opera of France's "beat generation" that has inspired broadsides from press and pulpit, pitted indignant teen-agers against scandalized *croulants* (crumbling ruins over forty years of age), enlivened dull dinner parties, broken up quiet family meals, and added little to my understanding of French youth and its problems. But in a somewhat oblique way it did provide a few clues to help me understand the results of the election.

Les Tricheurs ("The Cheaters") has obvious pretensions both as a social document and as a work of art. On the latter score they are not wholly unjustified, despite the maudlin scenario. Carné is a director with a diabolical talent for creating aberrant reality, and the young actors are all gifted. The twenty-year-old Pascale Petit, who plays the chief female cheater, Mic, has a kind of bruised psychopathic beauty that bites through your defenses.

The social import of the film is something else. Much of the action takes place in *bistros* and cellars around Saint-Germain-des-Prés, on the fringes of the ancient Latin Quarter, and—with the exception of a slightly older female refugee from the Françoise Sagan Scotch-and-sorrow set in fashionable Passy across the river—the main characters appear to be recently retired students who have tossed in the academic towel to concentrate on a career of being beat. But the movie is not actually concerned with the hardships, frustrations, and perils of real French student life, which do add up to one of the nation's gravest social problems. It is concerned rather with the star-crossed love of Bob and Mic—he a wealthy young "suburbanite" from the Right Bank, she a sulky little wench who dreams of owning a Jaguar and lives by sponging on her brother and stealing from her shopkeeper mother.

BOB AND MIC, according to their creator, are Romeo and Juliet in Saint-Germain-des-Prés. But as M. Carné has pointed out in

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an interview in *Le Monde,* "Here Romeo and Juliet are not kept apart by anything—neither their families nor their common tastes—but create their own taboos."

They are sincerely in love, but in the twisted little world they inhabit, love—as distinguished from sex—is a forbidden four-letter word. To avoid admitting their guilty secret, even to each other, they take refuge in frantic *surboums*—a kind of orgiastic tribal ceremony which is a highly imaginative version of the old-fashioned surprise party. They jump in and out of bed with various partners whose amorous techniques are afterwards subjected to collective criticism, and as the heliotrope prose of the distributors' press agent puts it, generally "strangle their hearts to keep from hearing them beat."

Mic gets her Jag (thanks to some amateur blackmail with the help of a comrade named Peter, who as a full-time gigolo seems to be the only gainfully employed member of the group) but loses Bob. After a final confrontation with him during a super-*surboum* in the home of the Passy aristocrat, Mic leaps into her Jag and drives wildly off into the night, which happens to be a rainy one. Blinded by the lights of an approaching truck as she careens through the countryside at ninety-five miles an hour—and doubtless confused as well as trying to figure out whether she is Françoise Sagan, James Dean, or Clara Bow—Mic finally crashes into it, a poor motorized moth with singed wings. The repentant Bob, who had been following her a shade more sedately in the family Citroën DS 19, manages to get her out of the crumpled Jag without having to use a putty knife, but she dies on the operating table. Matured by tragedy, Bob goes back to his books.

THAT, in an admittedly oversimplified version, is the story. Besides reeking of corn, it is riddled with clichés. For contrast with the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois decadence of the young cheaters—and no doubt to inject the discreet whiff of *progressisme* that was dutifully acknowledged by the left-wing film critics—Carné has equipped his Mic with an older brother who stands for the Wholesome Workingman.

The choice of Saint-Germain-des-Prés for the background is also somewhat heavy-handed. Up until ten years ago there did exist in this quarter a sizable group of young derelicts very much like those depicted by the film. But today the main foci of demoralization and delinquency among French youth are elsewhere; Saint-Germain-des-Prés has become an institution, a tourist attraction, a literary cliché. One still encounters plenty of seedy-looking youngsters in its smaller *bistros,* as one does everywhere on the Left Bank, but the shapeless blue jeans, the greasy turtle-neck sweaters, and the tousled hair do not necessarily signify moral nihilism. They may

merely indicate a night, or succession of nights, crouched on the sidewalk waiting in line to get tickets for a student canteen. (A thousand Parisian students recently passed the whole of a foggy, cold November night that way.)

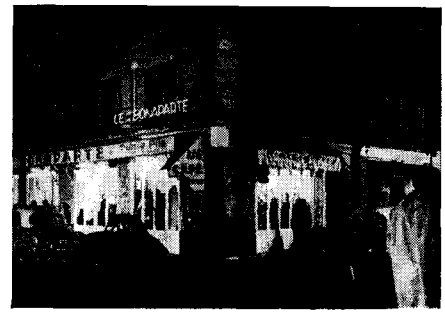
CARNE'S CHEATERS not only give a misleading impression of French youth—one of the least pampered, hardest-working, and most courageous on earth—but blur the symptoms of the unhealthy elements that undoubtedly exist in it by mixing up behavior traits from quite different age groups and social strata in a kind of composite photograph of Disordered Youth. As to the underlying causes of the disorder, all that M. Carné has to contribute, apart from some truisms about neglectful or excessively permissive parents, is the conclusion of his Wholesome Mechanic that today's young people are the victims of Fifty Years of Confusion.

Though not pornographic, *Les Tricheurs* does seem willfully scandalous in spots, and its whole mood ominously recalls the turbid climate of Weimar Germany. It is understandable that some of the more decrepit *croulants* have been wagging their beards in public about the film, that the Communists have been upbraiding Carné for not giving more footage to healthy garage life, and that the nationalist press has been filled with shrill yelps about the insult to French youth. The mystery is why French liberals, especially intellectuals, seemed to be attracted by the movie's dubious clichés as irresistibly—and perhaps as fatally—as Mic by those dancing headlights.

The most rudimentary political sophistication should have warned the liberals that in today's Gaullist France the legend of Saint-Germain-des-Prés is political poison. Yet at the very moment when they were faced with the all too difficult problem of convincing prospective voters that the candidates who proclaimed their Gaullism most noisily were not necessarily those who would help France—or even de Gaulle—the most, the leading liberal organs of the nation embarked on an irrelevant crusade in favor of Carné's shoddy masterpiece. The Mendésist weekly *L'Express* published a whole special supplement inspired by the film. The earnest fellow-traveling *Observateur* devoted two articles to it and then gave Carné a page to answer criticisms from readers. *Le Monde* ran not only a lengthy review of the film but also a two-column interview with Carné which in no way enhanced his stature as a deep social thinker. Some left-wing candidates for the National Assembly even tried to exploit the movie's notoriety in their campaign speeches.

"It's not Youth that is cheating," I heard a candidate of the Mendésist Union of Democratic Forces declaim to a listless Left Bank audience. "It's Society."

He was right in a way, but I knew then and there who was not going to win in that *arrondissement.* The French are simply fed up with that sort of talk.



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BOOKS

What the General Doesn't Tell

ROBERT P. KNAPP, JR.

WEDEMEYER REPORTS!, by General Albert C. Wedemeyer. *Holt. $6.*

General Wedemeyer gives us the reverse of the familiar dictum about war and generals. He finds that politics, using the term in its broadest sense, is much too serious a matter to be left to politicians.

Though not often a spectator of the physical struggle in the critical years 1941-1943, Wedemeyer was an alert observer and a vigorous combatant in the bloodless war-room battles where high Allied strategy was made. The general watched critically and closely; he kept a diary, too.

First he is a critic of the policies that took us into war. He remains a proponent of the theory that Germany and Russia could have fought each other to impotent exhaustion. He believes that Roosevelt deliberately provoked Japan's attack and pursued provocation to the point of intentionally leaving Pearl Harbor and the Philippines to their fates. It is in these first chapters that one first apprehends the book's great shortcoming. As Wedemeyer proceeds, he leaves behind him a lengthening roll of unanswered and perplexing questions. Too many conclusions are stated as facts, unsupported and undocumented. Too often does the author halt rather than pursue his reasoning.

He states that we imposed sanctions on Japan "not in order to help China, but to provoke Japan to attack, and thus resolve the President's dilemma of how to get us into the war to maintain Britain's power." Elsewhere he repeatedly acclaims China's long resistance and castigates our indifference to "her self-sacrificial efforts to stop Japan before 1941." Because he mistrusted Roosevelt's motives, would Wedemeyer have left China to Japan in 1941? It is no answer to say, as he does, that we should have imposed sanctions much earlier. The question is what should have been done in 1941. It is not answered.

The unifying theme of the book is amply clear: all Allied military operations should have been undertaken with a view to securing the most advantageous military position vis-à-vis the Communists in the postwar period. Apparently only Wedemeyer was alive to the full implications of a 1942 or 1943 cross-Channel attack as a means to this end. The British favored "nit-picking" and "periphery pecking" to preserve their empire. Churchill was "a glorious leader and a magnificent English worthy with lamentable deficiencies as a strategist." Wedemeyer is frank and generous in his praise of Churchill's courage, charm, and indomitability; he is outraged at what he sees as the prime minister's duplicity.

The book carefully develops the adroit conference-table maneuvers by which Churchill dissuaded us from a cross-Channel attack in 1942 to the North African campaign and the subsequent costly and inconclusive military adventures in the Mediterranean area. This story will be an eye opener to any who may still fancy that military strategy is the product of cold mathematical analysis of hard fact. Like a party platform, Allied high strategy was constructed of deals, personality infighting, and men's ambitions. And like the eminent politician that he was, Churchill prevailed in the councils of war because he had the best machine.

Ex Post Facto Memories

With the British it was "all for one and one for all." That one was Churchill. The Americans, according to Wedemeyer, were divided into three camps. There were the Army advocates of concentrating all effort on a smashing cross-Channel blow against Festung Europa. The Navy wanted major Pacific offensives. Finally there were the President and what Wedemeyer terms his "drugstore strategists"—Harry Hopkins, Sam Rosenman, Averell Harriman, and General Edwin M. ("Pa") Watson, the President's appointments secretary. In Wedemeyer's eyes it was always the British who prevailed because they "manipulated or enticed" the President to see things their way.

Though one does not question the candor with which the author recounts personal experiences, one is drawn to the conclusion that recollection is often overlaid with strong subjective influences. Frequently the resulting pastiche is paradoxical. Wedemeyer writes of a luncheon with Roosevelt in March, 1945. He relates his shock at the President's appearance and describes it in pathological detail, concluding that Roosevelt "seemed in a daze." One then reads with surprise that the President launched into a penetrating discussion of his views and Wedemeyer's on Indo-China. This was followed by "many questions concerning the Generalissimo," and a discussion of Wedemeyer's relations with Ambassador to China Pat Hurley. Only two conclusions seem possible: "in a daze" the President's mind was more than a match for the normally incisive, undazed mind, or Wedemeyer's memory has been affected by the knowledge of Roosevelt's death the following month.

IN THE WHOLE China controversy, no document is of more importance than the Wedemeyer Report, made after an official mission to China in 1947. The first portion of it is reprinted in an appendix to the present book. Rendered when the Communist tide was rising to its crest, it was not published until July, 1949, when it appeared in the United States' White Paper on China. General Wedemeyer states that the report was suppressed. The vital question is whether its "suppression" gave aid and comfort to Chiang Kai-shek or to his enemies. Wedemeyer's book provides no satisfactory answer.

His report called for ammunition for Nationalist China, but repeatedly warned that military aid to Chiang might stimulate similar aid to the Communists by Russia and "precipitate a third world war." It recommended that the Chinese Civil

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War be referred to the United Nations and that Manchuria be placed under a five-power guardianship. It stated that "Until drastic political and economic reforms are undertaken, United States aid can not accomplish its purpose." The report made the implementation of these reforms a condition of United States aid.

Wedemeyer states that he discussed "practically all of the ideas" in the report with Chiang. Before leaving China in 1947, in a speech to Chiang and his ministers, Wedemeyer said: "the Communist movement cannot be defeated by the employment of force . . . the Central Government will have to remove corruption and incompetence from its ranks in order to provide justice and equality and . . . to protect personal liberties." A full summary of the speech appears in the White Paper; there is only a watered-down, two-sentence synopsis in the present book.

DID CHIANG make the recommended reforms? Should we have given him full military aid whether he did or not, even if it meant risking a third world war, as Wedemeyer said? No one is better qualified to give an opinion on these issues than the man who posed them eleven year ago. It is regrettable that he has not done so.

The general says that if he had consented to delete certain parts, Secretary of State Marshall would have published his report in 1947. Again we are led to a blank wall. The author says that he refused to make the deletions, but he never says what the deletions were or why they were requested. The 1949 White Paper flatly states that the report had not previously been made public because of Wedemeyer's recommendation that the United Nations place Manchuria under a five-power guardianship that included Soviet Russia. Nine years after the White Paper, Wedemeyer's answer is silence. Since his *leitmotif* in this book is his deep-seated and long-standing distrust of Russian Communism, one wonders if in his silence there may be a trace of embarrassment.

Certainly it is no answer for him to say that he intends to develop his "China Thesis" in a later book. In this one he unsparingly condemns our China policy as "disastrous" and "bungling." It is reasonable to expect that he would now detail what he would have done and how he would have done it. It is fitting to ask him to reconcile the 1947 Wedemeyer who warned that the United States must not become involved in combat against the Communists with the 1958 Wedemeyer who quotes approvingly the Nationalist request for American command of their troops in 1948.

General Wedemeyer writes lucidly. Again and again he demonstrates that he draws from a sharp memory and an ample record. Although he is free and forthright in his criticism of others, he is also critical of himself. He expresses strong disagreement with many of General Marshall's views and policies. What Wedemeyer regards as Marshall's personal shortcomings are frankly catalogued, but Wedemeyer leaves no doubt or ambiguity as to his real and fundamental faith in Marshall's stature and principles. In his judicious treatment of the security-risk cases of John Paton Davies and John Stewart Service, he shows restraint and compassion. All of these and many other admirable aspects of this absorbing book intensify the mystery of why so much is left unexplained or half explained.

Scott's Last Friend

OTTO FRIEDRICH

BELOVED INFIDEL: THE EDUCATION OF A WOMAN, by Sheilah Graham and Gerold Frank. *Holt. $3.95.*

We generally assume that there is a ghost haunting the books ostensibly written by businessmen, generals, senators, or sports heroes, but we may now have reached the last stage —when writers hire ghost writers. F. Scott Fitzgerald was not above trying to get more money by palming off his wife's work as his own, and so it is quite fitting that his mistress should sign a regular movie column but feel compelled to use a "collaborator" in her memoirs. He is none other than Gerold Frank, who wrote eight successful ghost books before emerging into the daylight with the sex-and-drinking sagas of Lillian Roth and Diana Barrymore.

This is probably unfair. And, of course, one wants to be unfair. It was generally known that Fitzgerald had discovered the second love of his life in those last drunken Hollywood years, and that he had made her the heroine of his unfinished final novel, *The Last Tycoon,* but her identity was a moderately well-kept secret until the announcement that the celebrated Sheilah Graham was about to Tell All (with the help of Mr. Frank). One recalled the parody "Wives of great men all remind us, we can turn our lives to slime." Mr. Frank has a surprise, however, because Fitzgerald doesn't even appear until page 174. Instead, we start with the six-year-old Lily Sheil having her hair cropped to the skull at an East London orphanage, and with Mr. Frank's trumpet going full blast as he has Miss Graham say that the mere sound of her original name "sends the blood rushing to my cheeks, I break out in cold perspiration, I want to flee. . . ."

IT IS all that fantastic, both the story and the prose. Miss Sheil begins as a housemaid, then she sells toothbrushes, then she meets a minor steel-company president who likes her smile, and he hires her, and she loves him—but wait. Enter Monte Collins, who has millions and millions. He presents the young blonde with diamonds and says, "You will be my wife, Lily." But no. Johnny, her employer, has more charm, so she marries him. He has no objections to her concealing their marriage while she becomes a chorus girl and eventually a music-hall star. The Guards officers cluster around, Sir Something-or-Other shows her his dirty pictures, and she reflects, in one of Mr. Frank's classic lines, "Who would have thought it, the Prince of Wales asking about *me?*"

There must be some good answer

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to that question. Yet if we shudder at Miss Graham's desperate social climbing even more than at the mess she was climbing out of, Mr. Frank makes us feel differently as soon as the heroine meets Fitzgerald. Everyone knows that Fitzgerald was by this time a hopeless drunk, but we use the term without really seeing the hell in which the drunk lives, the hell he forces on everyone close to him. At one point, for example, Miss Graham enters Fitzgerald's hotel room to find him seated in front of a tray of food, with a napkin tied around his neck like a bib, while Arnold Gingrich of *Esquire* patiently tries to feed him. "Every now and then Scott tried to bite him." At other times, the famous author slaps Miss Graham's face, tries to kill her, sends her threatening notes, shouts out her past, and cables her employer that she ought to be fired.

Still, they were ideally paired, these two birds of paradise, the former show girl who even had her childhood photographs retouched to look more genteel, and the still handsome wreck of a genius who longed to be aristocratic as much as she did. (In turning her into Kathleen, for *The Last Tycoon,* he changed her fiancé from a marquess into an exiled king.) And despite her preening and her essential crassness, one feels finally compelled to admire Miss Graham, not only for putting up with so much but for loving Fitzgerald as much as she did, and for making his tortured last years a lot easier than they might have been. One admires her for that very East London toughness, which she pretends to despise but which prevented her from following Zelda Fitzgerald into an insane asylum.

As a portrait of Fitzgerald, *Beloved Infidel* should set scholars revising their footnotes. As a biography, it is thoroughly fascinating—even the gluey prose finally adds to its authenticity. And, recalling that Fitzgerald took his screen writing very seriously, one should add that *Beloved Infidel* practically cries out to be turned into a movie. Well it might, since a well-known film producer, now at work on it, apparently cooked up the project in the first place.

The Critic in Love

GERALD WEALES

Agee on Film, by James Agee. *McDowell, Obolensky. $6.*

Throughout this book, in which the best criticism by the late James Agee has been collected, there runs the assumption that the film is an art as well as a business—without, fortunately, any of the coterie cuteness about "art cinema." This assumption is apparent in the casual, unselfconscious way he uses the word "poem" to describe a film in which realism is lifted beyond itself into the aesthetic, in his use of other arts —music most often—in comparing effects, not means, and in his persistent discussion of superior films in terms of content *and* form, avoiding the ordinary preoccupation with content alone. His familiarity with the other arts allowed him brief and useful asides that say interesting things about writers as important as

Shakespeare and Dickens and that give cameo criticisms of minor figures as varied as Saroyan, Odets, and Coward.

Agee had an eye that responded naturally to D. W. Griffith's "Above all . . . I am trying to make you see," and a mind that could interpret the visual images and relate one image to another, and each to the larger meaning of the whole. He was at his best and happiest in those films in which the director and the cameraman operated with some subtlety, asking that the audience take part in the final creation. His descriptions of the photographic texture of films and his recognition of the ways the textures were used or misused are easily the most perceptive accounts of pure "seeing" that film criticism offers.

Agee's most important characteristic, however, was his love for the movies. I do not mean simple affection, although he had that too. It was his affection that allowed him to take pleasure in particular kinds of corn —*Lassie Come Home,* for instance—admitting, in amusement, that the movie was bad while he was enjoying it for reasons quite outside the demands of film-making. His love was stern stuff. It is evident in his ability—like Stark Young's in the theater—to pick out any good (in performance, in direction, in camera work, in intention) in even the worst movie. The love is even more apparent in his continual defense of the movies against the snobbishness of the kind of intellectual dilettante who can only work up enthusiasm for the odd or the arcane and against the adolescent mentality that accepts the bulk of movie production at its own false-face value. Against the former, he defended craftsmen like David O. Selznick, finding much to praise, for instance, in the saccharine *Since You Went Away,* while at the same time insisting upon defining the "suffocating genteelism" that such craftsmen as Selznick are capable of. The love is most obvious, however, when he came face to face with a really serious film, when he sank his teeth into one of Preston Sturges's comedies or Jean Renoir's *The Southerner* and shook it for its shortcomings, when he hailed *Monsieur Verdoux, Henry V,* the early Italian neo-realists, or the first American semi-documentaries and mixed his cheers with quiet and careful attention to imperfections. Probably more than any other kind of critic, the serious movie critic has to face the whining accusation of flaccid minds that wonder, querulously, "Don't you like anything?" No, not like—love. Agee's criticism is a collection of warm embraces and lover's quarrels, a fact that can be disturbing only to the kind of mind that does not know "the pain or anger that is almost inevitable in seeing a good thing fall short of its best possibilities."

Agee's film criticism, except for affectionate backward looks, such as

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his famous *Life* article on silent comedy and his moving *Nation* obituary of D. W. Griffith, is concerned with film production in the 1940's during the years when he was simultaneously film reviewer for *Time* and the *Nation*. It is possible to regret that there is no extensive Agee criticism of the films of the 1920's and 1930's, the years in which, for Agee, imagination and experimentation had not yet given way to business acumen. Though if he had examined those years as closely as he examined the 1940's, he probably would have found —as old movies on television have taught us—that the bulk of the work was as inept, pompous, and venal as the later Hollywood product. In some ways the 1940's were the best period for Agee, because in those years there began a gradual development of the kind of movie for which he longed. In review after review, we find him praising pictures in which the camera is taken out of the studio setup and given a chance to express an actual city or town, to explore a real background. He was not interested in simple camera reporting, but he assumed that until the camera was freed from the completely artificial it could not convert realism into the poetic and symbolic. For the same reason, he was always happy when familiar movie stars were by-passed for suitable faces and figures, when directors—like John Huston—used actors unconventionally but well (Tim Holt in *The Treasure of Sierra Madre*) or—like Vittorio da Sica—used amateurs effectively. There is little doubt that this attitude toward the use of the movie camera and the effective face grew out of his work with Walker Evans in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, in which the still camera is used as much more than a recorder of the actual—as an interpreter and a maker of metaphor.

DURING THE 1940's the American and British war documentaries and, later, the location work of such films as *Boomerang!* and the first flowering of the postwar Italian film gave an indication that movies could be made in the way that Agee thought they should. These years, then, gave him a chance not only to review what was at hand but also to find in that material the first indications of a possible renaissance. Now we know that the Italian neo-realists can easily go soft and operatic and that the Americans have become so location-happy that they race around in search of the right place, casually ignoring that more than place is necessary for a good film. There are indications throughout that Agee was aware that once cinematic revolutions are won, the sweet peace of corruption sets in, so he would not be surprised at what has happened.

Agee on Film is a remarkable and welcome volume, but, as Agee certainly would not mind my saying, it has its faults too. It contains all of his *Nation* criticism, and although this is good because it gives a sense of the rhythm of a reviewer from column to column, it involves the printing of a vast number of now pointless (except for the humor) thumbnail reviews. The selections from *Time*—the fine review of Olivier's *Hamlet* aside—only serve to indicate that even Agee could not avoid the familiar ghastly jargon—"cinemaddicts," "cinemagician"—and the omnipresent adjective—"nutcracker-faced, 56-year-old Barry Fitzgerald." His wit in the *Nation* is personal ("Watching *The White Cliffs of Dover* is like drinking cup after cup of tepid orange pekoe at a rained-out garden party staged by some deep-provincial local of the English-speaking Union"). In *Time*, although occasionally funny, the jokes are almost institutional; his high seriousness about the movies is watered slightly for the audience. He does, however, retain his integrity; the kind of thing that he praises anonymously in *Time* is the same thing that he praises under his name in the *Nation*. The two *Life* pieces—the one on silent comedy and the one on John Huston—seem superficial on rereading, but both of them, particularly the one on comedy, are scattered with good film sense. The volume also contains two other essays—a good one from *Sight and Sound* on *Sunset Boulevard* and an interesting but irrelevant one from *Partisan Review* that has nothing at all to do with the movies. On the whole, *Agee on Film* is a long, literate, loving collection of one intelligent, sharp-eyed critic's very personal comments; it is also America's most important contribution to film criticism.

RECORDS

The Season's Offerings

ROLAND GELATT

THANKS to the Royal Ballet (né Sadler's Wells) and to LP records, the enchanting domain of evening-length ballets—notably those of Tchaikovsky and Delibes—has been opened up for general exploration. Certain excerpts from *Sleeping Beauty* were, of course, long familiar; but not until Sadler's Wells revived the uncut three-act ballet in the 1940's did most of us come to recognize it as Tchaikovsky's masterpiece.

Regrettably, Sadler's Wells' greatest conductor, the late Constant Lambert, never recorded an uncut *Sleeping Beauty*. A recent full-length recording by George Weldon and the Philharmonia Orchestra (Angel 3579B) comes close, however, to equaling Lambert's memorable performances. Weldon conveys just the right sense of relaxation and never breaks the fragile spell of Tchaikovsky's musical fairy tale.

Coppélia, too, seems a much more delightful and important confection when heard in its entirety. The score is a summation of Second Empire elegance; it summons forth the image of troops in vermilion shakos, of monocled boulevardiers, of extravagantly crinolined ladies. *Coppélia* needs above all to be played with crisp, fastidious suavity. This is precisely the treatment it receives from Ernest Ansermet and the Suisse Romande Orchestra in a complete recording of the ballet released first in a monophonic version (London LL 1717/18) and now in stereo as well (London CSA 2201). Either way it is a dazzling joy. Antal Dorati and the Minneapolis Symphony have also recorded *Coppélia* complete (Mercury OL-2-105), but this robust and sometimes rough performance does not evoke, for me at least, visions of Louis Napoleon's Paris.

BEETHOVEN'S Ninth Symphony is not my idea of appropriate music for the living room. The amount and complexity of sound at

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its climaxes sorely taxes recording microphones and overpowers all but the most elaborate high-fidelity equipment. More than that, the work itself borders on the incongruous when heard in intimate surroundings; it needs a large concert hall, an assembled multitude of performers and listeners, the ambience of a great occasion to make its proper effect. But this opinion is obviously not shared by the record-buying public, which has acquired more copies of Toscanini's performance of the Ninth than any other classical album in the history of the industry.

To meet this obvious demand, new recordings appear fairly regularly. The latest version is led by Otto Klemperer, with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus and a quartet of respectable European singers—Aase Nordmo-Loevberg, Christa Ludwig, Waldemar Kmentt, and Hans Hotter (Angel 3577-B). It is on the whole a fine performance, akin in spirit to the severe, classic interpretation favored by Toscanini, and recorded with considerably greater clarity and dynamic range than was possible in 1952 when Toscanini's recording was made. Klemperer's interpretative powers have undergone a curious and wonderful efflorescence during the past several years. He was always a highly capable conductor, but of late he has become much more than that. It is as if nature, abhorring the vacuum created by the deaths of Toscanini, Furtwängler, and Kleiber, had suddenly matured Klemperer into an artist worthy of their succession. His recent recordings of the Beethoven *Eroica* (Angel 35328) and Seventh (Angel 35330) and of the four Brahms symphonies (Angel 35481, 35532, 35545, and 35546) have been widely and justly admired. The new Ninth is also a remarkable performance—but I still would rather not hear it in my living room.

DURING AN INTERVIEW at the time of his recent American debut, Vladimir Ashkenazy was asked—as performers often are—to name his favorite composer. "Prokofiev," the young Soviet pianist replied in a rather surprised tone, as if somewhat at a loss to understand why a question eliciting such an obvious answer had even been posed. Most musicians would not rank Prokofiev quite so high, but young Ashkenazy's enthusiasm underscores the steep upgrading of Prokofiev's reputation that has taken place in the five years since the composer's death. Recordings have furthered this reassessment. The vast range of Prokofiev's lifework—operas, ballets, film scores, chamber music, concertos, and symphonies—can be savored extensively on records, from the explosively brilliant Piano Concerto No. 1 of 1911 to the complex, rhapsodic Sinfonia Concertante completed in the last months of his life.

A recent addition to the Prokofiev discography is the suite from the ballet *Chout* (also known as *The Buffoon*), performed by the London Symphony under Walter Susskind and recorded both monaurally and stereophonically for a new American label called Everest (LPBR 6001 and SDBR 3001 respectively). *Chout* was a Diaghilev production of 1921 and represents Prokofiev's deepest penetration into the grotesque, the barbaric. Although the music has been recorded before, its stinging instrumentation and highly nuanced melodic invention never fared very well over the loudspeaker. But stereo spreads out the gorgeous noises, clarifies the instrumental juxtapositions, and reveals *Chout* as one of Prokofiev's greatest glories.

THE GRAPEVINE that keeps opera lovers throughout the world informed of promising new singers has been active lately, touting the merits of Aase Nordmo-Loevberg (a Norwegian lyric soprano) and Leonie Rysanek (an Austrian dramatic soprano). Recital records by these young artists are now at hand. Miss Loevberg's is given over to songs of Grieg and Strauss (Angel 35590), Miss Rysanek's to Italian opera arias (RCA Victor LM 2262). Each has some extraordinary moments. Strauss's *"Traum durch die Dämmerung"* and *"Meinem Kinde"* on the Loevberg record give lustrous evidence of a gentle, soaring legato, an imaginative command of tone and coloration, and the ability to convey a sense of rapt *Innigkeit*.

Leonie Rysanek, whom the Met this season has cast as Lady Macbeth in place of Maria Callas, is particularly compelling in the aria *"In questa reggia"* from Puccini's *Turandot*. The adjective commonly selected to describe the vocal writing in this aria is "cruel," and in the thirty-odd years since the opera's premiere very few singers have been able to negotiate its high tessitura with the requisite icy composure and sense of power in reserve. Miss Rysanek carries it off with chilling aplomb.

A CARDINAL RULE in the record industry is never to let an anniversary go by uncommemorated. Accordingly we can expect next year more than ordinary attention to the music of Handel and Haydn, who had the consideration to die in 1759 and 1809 respectively. Anniversary offerings are already appearing.

From Columbia we have the initial installment of a complete recording of Handel's sixteen organ concertos by E. Power Biggs and the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Sir Adrian Boult's direction (K2L-258, two LPs containing Nos. 1-6 of Opus 4). Over the past few years Mr. Biggs has been searching Europe for authentic old organs of the periods that interest him, and the results of his investigations have been embodied in a series of fascinating recordings. For the Handel undertaking he located an instrument designed according to the composer's specifications and very probably played upon by him during the latter years of his life. Its tone is not as varied or as plangent as some of the other organs Mr. Biggs has introduced to us, but it has the clear, twangy quality of all good eighteenth-century organs and its authenticity is obvious. The music itself is top-drawer Handel (the concertos date from the period of his great oratorios), and never has it sounded so well on records.

As for Haydn, Sir Thomas Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra have recorded the twelve "Salomon" symphonies, of which six (Nos. 93-98) are now available in a three-LP album (Capitol GCR 7127). The remainder will be issued some time in 1959. It would be superfluous to dilate on the rapport between Sir Thomas and the music of Haydn. The Haydn year could not have begun better.

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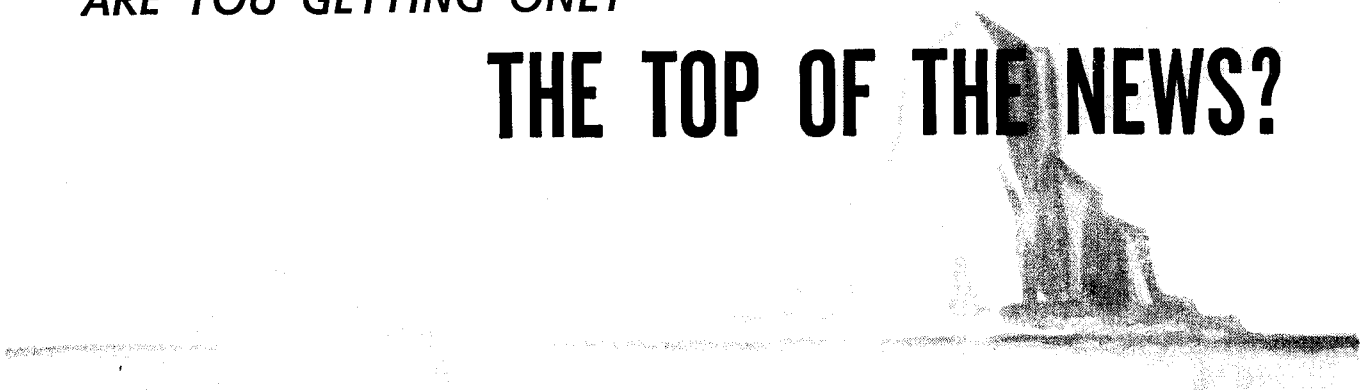

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There lives at this time in Judea

. . . a man of singular virtue whose name is Jesus Christ, whom the barbarians esteem as a prophet, but whose followers love and adore as the offspring of the immortal God. He calls back the dead from the grave and heals all sorts of diseases with a word or touch.

He is a tall man, well shaped, of an amiable and reverend aspect, and his hair is of a color that can hardly be matched, falling in graceful curls, waving about and very agreeably couching upon his shoulders, parted on the crown of his head, running as a stream to the front fashioned after the Nazarites.

His forehead high, large and imposing; his cheeks without spot or wrinkle, and beautiful with a lovely red; his nose and mouth formed with exquisite symmetry; his beard of a color suitable to his hair, reaching below his chin and parted in the middle like a fork.

His eyes bright blue, clear and serene, look innocent and dignified, manly and mature. In proportion of body, most perfect and captivating, his hands and arms most delectable to behold.

He rebukes with majesty, counsels with mildness, his whole address, whether in word or deed, being eloquent and grave.

No man has seen him laugh, yet his manners are exceedingly pleasant; but he has frequently wept in the presence of men.

He is temperate, modest and wise; a man for his extraordinary beauty and divine perfection surpassing the children of men in every sense.

—Apocryphal word portrait ascribed to one Publius Lentulus during the reign of Tiberius Caesar and first found in the writings of Saint Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury during the eleventh century.

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